

7-1-1999

## Evangelical Visitor - July/August, 1999 Vol. 112. No. 4

Glen A. Pierce

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### Recommended Citation

Pierce, Glen A., "Evangelical Visitor - July/August, 1999 Vol. 112. No. 4" (1999). *Evangelical Visitor (1887-1999)*. 2666.<https://mosaic.messiah.edu/evanvisitor/2666>

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*evangelical*

July/August 1999

# VISITOR

**“Curing hate by love may seem like a wintry task, but we can pour on love as recklessly and with as great abandon as the geranium pours out color and brightness, for our God is the God of love, and there is no limit to His supply.”**

**Elsie C. Bechtel**

■ **Christ's Kingdom  
and Governments**

■ **What about  
Enemies?**





## Introduction to our Brethren in Christ attitude toward governments

In the first Confession of Faith of the Brethren, as recorded in C.O. Wittlinger's *Quest for Piety and Obedience*, the signers said:

*...We also learn from the doctrine of the Lord Jesus that swearing of pledges is forbidden, therefore it shall be forbidden of us also, Matt. 5:34. Therefore it is completely forbidden to bear the sword for revenge or defense, verses 39, 40. We also learn from the doctrine of the Lord Jesus and His apostles that it is forbidden to any member or follower of Jesus Christ to occupy authoritative offices, therefore it is and shall be forbidden to us. We are not to withstand authority, but be obedient in all that is right and good, paying them tax and toll and protection money, because Paul calls it God's servant (Rom. 13); so we see that God rules all nature, and has men who rule nature, and this is for the benefit of the children of God, else it would be still more difficult to live in this world; therefore Paul commands us to pray for them, that they may perform their duty loyally, so that the children of God under them may lead a quiet and blessed life. But we shall not use them for power...*

In Emerson Leshner's article, "The Church and Governments," he carefully analyzes our present situation, more than 200 years

after our original faith statement. There is clearly recognizable similarity in our 1994 statement:

*...Loyalty to Christ and the trans-national Church takes precedence over loyalty to the State.*

Leshner argues: "As we look to the future, I believe we as Brethren in Christ members should not be bound by the limits of governments and majority opinion. We should live in peace with the government as we are able, but we should align ourselves with God and the church more than a specific government."

To support this and related issues, we present the words of Jesus in Matthew 5, "Words to Live By." For your stimulus, consider the seven Brethren in Christ responses to Jesus' Teachings on the Mountain which follow the words of Jesus.

These issues are worthy of careful thought and conversation in the spirit of Malachi 3:16: "Then those who feared the Lord talked with each other, and the Lord listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the Lord and honored his name."

—Wilmer Heisey, Associate Editor

## Genesis speeds to 7th final position in Sunrayce 99, clinching Messiah's first top ten Sunrayce finish

Surrounded by Disney characters and a crowd of well-wishers from Messiah College, Genesis, the Messiah College-Harsco Corporation solar racing team, finished the last leg of Sunrayce 99 in 4th position on June 29—earning 7th place out of 29 competitors overall. This marks Genesis' first top ten finish in the national solar racing competition, which included teams from such schools as University of Pennsylvania, Purdue University, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, University of Michigan, University of Toronto, and Yale University.

Taking advantage of the partly sunny skies, Genesis ran hard on the rolling 82-mile trek from Ocala, Fla. to the finish line at Epcot Center in Disney World. Genesis' total elapsed time for Sunrayce's 1,300 mile route was 69 hours, 43 minutes and 6 seconds, with an average speed of 20.42 mph.

"We had the most incredible race day," said Dr. Donald Pratt, Genesis' Messiah College faculty advisor, in a phone interview. "It was so good to finally see the sun.

We ran hard, passed all the teams we needed to pass, and made all the right moves today," he said. "The team is so excited. This is the race we wanted to run all week. It was our goal to finish in the top ten—and we did."

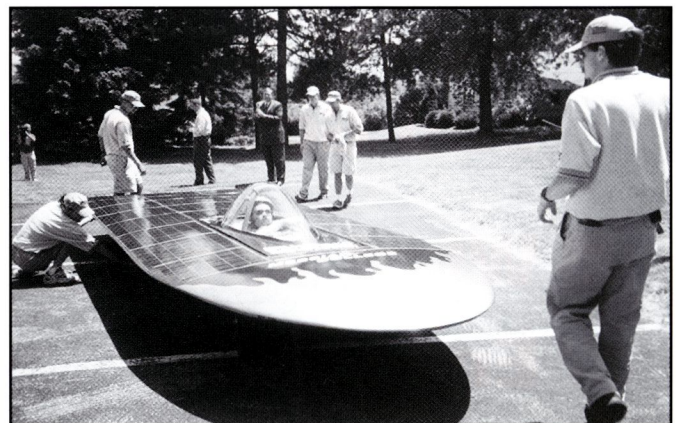
On the first day of the race, the team from Messiah finished in second place, moving up from its 17th starting slot. On day four, the team finished in first place. Several days of the race were plagued with clouds and rainy driving conditions.

Genesis was selected as one of ten Sunrayce solar cars for a two-day exhibit at Epcot Center.

Sunrayce is a

biennial, 10-day (June 20-29) solar car race traveling this year from Washington, D.C. to Epcot Center at Walt Disney World, in Orlando, Fla. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy, General Motors and EDS, the race features college and university teams from across North America that design, build and drive cars powered solely by electricity from solar panels.

This year marks Genesis' third Sunrayce competition. Genesis finished in 12th position in Sunrayce 97 and in 22nd position in Sunrayce 95.





# evangelical VISITOR

The official publication of the Brethren in Christ Church

July/August 1999

Vol. 112, No. 4

## Brethren in Christ Church General Church Offices

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## EVANGELICAL VISITOR

(ISSN 0745-0486) is published  
six times a year by Evangel Press  
2000 Evangel Way (P.O. Box 166)  
Nappanee, IN 46550-0166  
Telephone (219) 773-3164  
FAX number: (219) 773-5934  
E-mail: [eph@tlh.net](mailto:eph@tlh.net)

Member of the Evangelical Press  
Association and Meetinghouse, a  
Mennonite and Brethren in Christ  
editors group. Biblical quotations,  
unless otherwise indicated, are from  
the New International Version.

Editor: Glen A. Pierce

Associate Editor: J. Wilmer Heisey

Cover Design: Zendra Manley

Circulation: Nancy Lentz

**Mailing Information:** All correspon-  
dence, manuscripts and subscriptions  
should be addressed to the Editor,  
*Evangelical Visitor*, P. O. Box 166,  
Nappanee, IN 46550-0166. Changes  
of address should include both the old  
and new address and the identification  
numbers on the first line of the label.

**Single Copy Price:** \$1.00 (U.S. funds)

**U.S. Subscriptions:** 1 year-\$12.00;  
2 years-\$21.50; 3 years-\$30.00;  
5 years-\$48.00. New and Gift: \$10.25.

**Canadian Subscriptions** (in  
Canadian funds): 1 year-\$14.50;  
2 years-\$26.50; 3 years-\$38.50;  
5 years-\$60.00. New and Gift: \$12.25.  
(Use U.S. prices if remitting in U.S.  
funds.)

Overseas airmail rates available upon  
request.

Periodical postage paid at Nappanee,  
IN 46550-0166. Printed in U.S.A.

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**COVER:** The quotation is by Elsie Bechtel, writing in the July 16, 1945, issue of the *Evangelical Visitor*. Elsie has given a lifetime of service to the church—in her integrated home congregation (Valley Chapel, Ohio); in MCC assignments in France, Germany, and Greece (1945-48, 1959-61); and with Brethren in Christ Missions in Nicaragua (1979-81).





“Loyalty to Christ and the Church, which is trans-national, takes precedence over loyalty to the state.”

Articles of Faith and Doctrine

# The Church and Governments

by Emerson L. Leshner

ONE OF THE CENTRAL MESSAGES communicated to me as a young person growing up in a Brethren in Christ family, was the belief that the “majority is usually wrong.” If a majority of people in the “world” believed something to be true, that was usually evidence that the position they held, or the behavior they engaged in, was likely wrong. Sermons on such topics as “Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction” and “Beware when all persons speak well of you” were not unusual. It was assumed that we were a minority and would not be fully accepted or understood. It was believed that the church, at least the Brethren in Christ Church, was to be a transformed community of faith and fellowship, separated from the “world.” I learned to be suspicious of majority culture and perceive God’s methods of change to be akin to a mustard seed and yeast.

Church and family did not always clearly define what was “worldly,” but at least one aspect of the world was participation in government. Governmental actions were guided by “worldly” ideals, and sought compromise more than truth. North American governments were largely based on the will of the majority. If majority-will rules, how can the government be anything but worldly (and non-Christian)? Typically the government did not let its “yea” be “yea,” or its “nay,” “nay.” Hence, early Brethren in Christ would

not “swear” before government officials, but affirmed their intention to tell the simple truth.

For the past fifty years many members of the Brethren in Christ Church have been reconsidering the “majority is wrong” approach to church and civic life. Some members have reacted by overcompensating, and accepting about everything the world has to offer. Some have drawn new lines around the “world,” redefining the minority and majority. Others have been selective in what they take from the world.

Based on personal observation (not a well-designed study), it is my impression that Brethren in Christ members relate quite differently to government today than they did about 50 years ago. One prime example is the practice of voting. Whereas members were once advised not to vote, today members are frequently encouraged to vote. I may be incorrect, but it is my impression that many members today would think it odd that a Christian would not vote, based on a biblical conviction. At least I have not heard a sermon, or read an article recently, on why it is appropriate for a Christian not to vote. The trend has been for sermons and articles to encourage voting and involvement in government activities. Gradually, we have come to relate to government in a direct manner. Church members relate to government in almost every way available or open to any



citizen. For example, individual members vote, run for office, work for the government, pay taxes to the government, litigate issues, and attempt to lobby or influence government policy and elections. An interesting survey would be to ask if there is any government position or activity that a Brethren in Christ member should not participate in because of biblical conviction (e.g. sue someone, serve as a policeman, run for President, serve as executor, become a Supreme Court justice, lobbyist, political consultant, etc.). Today we seem more preoccupied with attempting to join and influence the government than avoiding or criticizing it.

**H**AVING JUMPED OUT ON A LIMB with my assumptions about how members have embraced government, I would like to take another step out on the limb. Members of the Brethren in Christ Church have embraced the government, and have done so with little biblical study or discernment from within our own Christian tradition. In the past ten years there have been few conferences, articles, sermons, discussions, studies, etc., that have attempted to discern a Brethren in Christ understanding of a Christian's relationship with government. Instead, we have accepted beliefs and actions from other church traditions and worldly systems. In simple language, we have accepted evangelical and particularly Calvinist traditions of how to relate to governments. We have tended to be part of the majority so as to influence, legislate, and even "overcome" others. James Dobson and Jerry Falwell have greatly influenced our thinking about how Christians should relate to government.

That we have not had more discernment among ourselves about how to relate to the government is unfortunate. Not only have many members moved from a more traditional Brethren in Christ position, but during the past fifty years the U. S. government has also been changing how it relates to its citizens. Government has become a primary institution in North American society, and the rest of the world. Government has become the "mother" of all social institutions. Around the world, governments are

attempting to replace families, tribes, cultures, religions, ethnic groups, etc. as the primary entity around which humans should organize themselves. Today North American governments are involved in almost every aspect of our lives. They attempt to control education, health care, transportation, communications systems, financial systems, zoning, occupations, agriculture, business, etc. The gradual and pervasive control by the government is one reason why many Brethren in Christ and other Christians believe we must be involved in government. They reason that if the government touches all of life and cannot be avoided, then Christians should be part of it to help influence it for good.

Historically the Brethren in Christ Church has taken a rather suspicious attitude toward the "world." Again, the beliefs and systems (including governments) of the world were assumed to be flawed. Today Brethren in Christ seek to be part of the majority or to at least create a majority through social movements and political activities. It seems to me that one of the concerns of earlier members was that the Church, God's kingdom on earth, was to be the primary social institution in which members invested their energy, commitment, resources and allegiance. Participation in government was to be avoided so as not to distract a member from God and the community of believers. Christ and the Church were to define how one lived life, found meaning, and related to others. A prime example of this is whether one should serve in the military and be prepared to take the lives of others (even fellow Christians) to protect the interests of the government. Early Brethren in Christ members clearly stated that the Church took priority over the government in determining whether a member should take the life of others. The teachings of Christ and the primacy of the Church took priority over the interests of government.

As members embrace government rather than being cautious, I believe we create a greater risk of aligning ourselves with the priorities of the government rather than the priorities of Christ and the Church. It may be, however, that the degree of separation

One of the concerns of earlier members was that the Church, God's kingdom on earth, was to be the primary social institution in which members invested their energy, commitment, resources and allegiance.



*A central message of the Christian gospel is that Christ has set us free from being primarily "Jew" or "Greek." Christ established the Church, not a government.*

from government of former days is no longer possible or appropriate. How do we live, cautiously, in the 2000s with a pervasive government that touches the lives of members in many ways? Some questions remain: (1) Can we embrace some aspects of government, but not others? (2) How can we ensure that the teachings of Christ and the advancement of God's Kingdom take priority over the support and allegiance to the government?

Government can engage in positive activities. The government's protection of the civil rights of all persons is one example of the positive effects of government. The Social Security and Medicare systems have helped lift many persons out of poverty in their old age and greatly improved their quality of life. There are other examples which show how government can have a positive effect. Why shouldn't members participate in such positive activities?

One of the paradigmatic changes taking place around the world is the globalization of business, communication and organizations such as the Church. This will likely have an impact on how we think about, and relate to, government in the future. A primary danger is that members will have aligned themselves with one specific government and may miss the opportunity to perceive geographic/political boundaries and social reality in a new way. For example, I do not think God is limited by the geographical/political boundaries established by humans (so why should we be limited?) A central message of the Christian gospel is that Christ has set us free from being primarily "Jew" or "Greek." Christ established the Church, not a government. He was interested in establishing a "new community" irrespective of citizenship. As we look to the future, I believe we as Brethren in Christ members should not be

bound by the limits of governments and majority opinion. We should live in peace with the government as we are able, but we should align ourselves with God and the Church more than a specific government.

The statement which focuses on our relationship to the government in the *Brethren in Christ Articles of Faith and Doctrine* is a good summary of my beliefs, and is a good place to begin a discussion of how Brethren in Christ members should relate to the government. It says:

*The Church recognizes the place God ordains for government in society. As Christians, we pray for the state and those who are in authority. At the same time, we believe loyalty to Christ and the Church, which is trans-national, takes precedence over loyalty to the state. Selective involvements in the affairs of government are appropriate for believers if loyalty to Christ and the principles of His Kingdom are carefully guarded, and if such participation will enhance one's Christian witness and service.*

Emerson Leshar is President of Messiah Village, a continuing care retirement community in Mechanicsburg, Pa.



**Pontius' Puddle**

Bulletins and newsletters reprinting "Pontius Puddle" must pay \$10 for each use to Joel Kauffman, 111 Carter Road, Goshen, IN 46526.





# Words To LIVE By

**From  
Matthew 5**

(New Revised  
Standard  
Version)

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

## **The Beatitudes**

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

## **Salt and Light**

You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

## **The Law and the Prophets**

Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

## **Concerning Anger**

You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not murder'; and 'whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a

You have  
heard it  
said...

But I say  
to you...



Unless  
your  
righteous-  
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exceeds  
that of the  
scribes  
and  
Pharisees,  
you will  
never  
enter the  
kingdom  
of heaven.

brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, 'You fool,' you will be liable to the hell of fire. So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

### **Concerning Adultery**

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.

### **Concerning Divorce**

It was also, said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

### **Concerning Oaths**

Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord. But I say to you, do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let your word be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one.

### **Concerning Retaliation**

You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

### **Love for Enemies**

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.



# Seven Brethren in Christ responses to Jesus' teachings on the mountain

As Jesus was finishing his teaching, he said: "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock."

In this issue, seven responses are recorded about the experiences of persons who "put into practice" what they understood of Jesus' teachings. A few words of identification follow each story.

## Peacemaking in Harrisburg

by Lou Astuto

OUR CONGREGATION, the Harrisburg Brethren in Christ Church, has always held a strong commitment to Anabaptist principles. Peacemaking is no exception.

Starting in August 1997, our journey as peacemakers has taken us to a new level. A man was referred to me by a co-worker, who was also a member of our congregation. As we met together, we discovered that we were both Vietnam veterans, and had actually been stationed twenty-five miles away from each other in 1968.

Our meetings together continued on a weekly basis, mostly meeting in his office in downtown Harrisburg, over the lunch hour. We then formed a dinner club with a few other vets and went out together once a month. The group enjoyed having a minister along that they could pick on when there was a lull in the conversation.

Through those dinner meetings I met Frank Cossick, who had been a leader in the local chapter of Point Man Ministries. Frank introduced me to a newly formed club of Vietnam veterans in our area. All of these interactions taken together showed the Lord's leading. Woody Dalton, the senior pastor of our congregation, continued to encourage me to "go for it."

We now have a growing group in our church that is made up of Vietnam vets and their families. In October 1998 three vets and one of their spouses came forward in a Sunday morning worship service to receive Christ as their Savior and Lord. A number of others made recommitments to Christ. On November 25, 1998 the three veterans and one spouse testified to God's grace in their lives and were baptized. The baptismal service was a blessed time of rejoicing for the congregation, with

applause and tears. In January 1999 we started a new believers Bible study comprised mostly of veterans and their families.

What, you might ask, has this meant to our congregation? We realized we could no longer ignore Memorial Day in our church. We had special prayer for healing the wounds of war for veterans, secondary survivors (wives, companions and children) and civilians who have lived in war torn areas. The vets in our church know that we are not the kind of church that will just have them stand up for a yearly round of applause on the Fourth of July, but will journey with them through the healing process, even when the effects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other war-related conditions are making life difficult for them. In April of this year, pastors Woody Dalton, Sheila Wright and myself traveled to Washington, D.C. with a group of 35 vets and family members to tour the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Much healing took place that day.

On a personal note, I have seen God's healing hand extended to me in the form of my brother and sister veterans. I had avoided contact with other vets and, especially, veterans organizations since I came home in 1969. The Lord gently brought me from a place of emotional isolation, and anger regarding Vietnam, to a place where I was ready to allow healing to begin within me. I can now look back and see how God's hand has been extended to me through the ministry of different people over the past seven or eight years.

Peacemaking has always taken the Brethren in Christ to places where we could not see the end from the beginning. These recent developments in our congregation are no exception. By faith we will continue to look to the Lord to lead us on our journey as a peacemaking congregation.

---

*Lou Astuto, the associate pastor of the Harrisburg (Pa.) Brethren in Christ Church tells his personal story—"from a place of emotional isolation...to a place where I was ready to allow healing begin within me"—to healing ministries involving other Vietnam veterans.*



# If someone wants to take your car...

by Mildred B. Charles

From Brown County, Kansas, Mildred Byer Charles recounts a story about her husband's family. Her father-in-law's response to a theft had "nothing to do with the war" but best expressed her understanding of nonresistance. During the 1930s, finances were tight, but the Charles family had saved enough money to buy a car, "and this was something tremendous." Quite soon, however, the new car disappeared. Jacob Charles was quite sure he knew who had taken it because the suspect had been on the farm asking questions and later drove an identical car. Jacob never pressed charges, telling his family that someone who

had gone to the lengths of theft must have had greater need than the Charles family, who went back to travelling with horses for "a long time" before they saved enough to buy another car.

Charles concludes: "to me, that's nonresistance in real life; that's the real test right there."

---

*Jacob Charles was a minister in Brown County, Kansas, who, during the Great Depression, did what he thought Jesus wanted him to do when his new car was stolen by someone in the community. The story was told by Mildred B. Charles. Excerpted from a 1998 unpublished dissertation by Mary Jane Heisey, **Seeking Community: Brethren in Christ Nonresistance and American Society, 1914-1958**. Used by permission.*

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## My Selective Service experiences

by Harold H. Engle, M.D.

ONLY TWO OF US were conscientious objectors (CO in our draft board's terminology) in my graduating class at Greenville College in 1939. My CO classification, 4E, continued through medical school and internship. There were just two of us who were COs in our graduating class at Temple Medical School. The Dean of Temple Medical School was dismayed that several graduates were COs.

Mary Elizabeth and I were married during my internship at Lankenau Hospital. Shortly thereafter, Mary Elizabeth was diagnosed as having a very guarded prognosis with military tuberculosis, and returned to Ohio for complete bed rest at home. Upon completion of my internship I was called to the Draft Board, and was rejected on the basis of hypertension and anxiety. Thus I was re-classified, 4F, but subject to recall and re-examination.

In spite of my classification, I accepted a voluntary position with the Florida State Board of Health in Valpariso, Florida, which had been previously approved as a Civilian Public Service (C.P.S.) project. After five months I was

accepted for a residency in Medicine at Delaware County General Hospital for one year. Upon completion the Pennsylvania Procurement and Assignment Board suggested Palmyra, Pa., as an area of need for private practice. My CO position was understood in each of my work assignments.

During the first five years in Palmyra, 1945-50, with Mary Elizabeth's improvement she joined me there, and we had a very busy practice with most medical personnel and patients aware of my position on war. There were no problems with hospital admitting privileges in Lebanon. However, I was denied such privileges at Hershey Hospital, presumably because of my nonresistant position. The Lebanon hospitals posed no problem or discrimination.

With Mary Elizabeth's health status improved, in 1950 we accepted an assignment with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) for medical work among the tribal people in Formosa. Working with Dr. Ko, a small hospital was established and, in 1953, we returned to reopen our Palmyra practice.

Awaiting us, however, was an F.B.I.

investigation and a summons to the Draft Board for re-examination and 2 years of active duty. Almost simultaneously I was asked to appear in Washington, D. C. before the Senate Armed Services Committee chaired by Senator Stennis. At that time I gave a presentation of the MCC world-wide work in general, and Formosa in particular. Shortly thereafter, General Lewis B. Hershey countermanded the request for further duty, apparently in view of the volunteer service with MCC in Formosa.

I then reopened the practice in Palmyra and soon became very busy in medical work, with hospital privileges in Lebanon as before. Fifteen years later, with change of administrators, I was invited to join the medical staff at Hershey Hospital and was subsequently named as Chief of Staff. Then, with the opening of the Hershey Medical Center, I became a clinical affiliate in Family and Community Medicine there.

During the 45 years of medical practice, the Lord gave us three short-term medical assignments in Zambia and Zimbabwe.

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*Harold H. Engle is a medical doctor who was completing his training during World War II. In addition to 45 years of medical practice, he served on the Board of Trustees of Messiah College for many years, and was an active layman in the Palmyra, Pa., congregation.*



# A father teaches his son

by Lester C. Fretz

**M**AKING HAY was one of the major summer tasks for our large herd of Holsteins. In order to have sufficient hay for the winter months, we sometimes cut and baled hay for other farmers on a shared basis. I'll never forget the time my Dad sent me to a farm a few miles away and told me to make the hay in a certain field. It was the worst field of hay I had ever seen! Weeds made up much of the crop. The hay was so short and scant that the bales were sparsely spaced across the field. I soon realized that we had made a poor deal with the owner.

I took my two younger brothers to the field to pick up our hay and, knowing how many bales were in the field, I calculated our share. Then I decided that rather than leaving every third bale for the owner, it would save him a lot of driving if we would simply take our share of the hay from one side of the field and leave the other side for him. I was trying to be kind to him—so I thought, for a couple of months.

Sometime later, as we were driving up the road in our pickup, we were flagged down by this farmer in his red, rusty, rattly pickup. He was most irate. He had just gone to the field to get his well-weathered hay, now late in the fall. And he was angry! The farmer's face was nearly as red as his truck. In a mean voice he yelled at my father, "Howard, I thought I could trust you, but your boys have cheated me. They took all of the good hay, and left me with the poor hay."

My Dad was apologetic. He spoke gently to the farmer and tried to quiet him down. When I attempted to interrupt, to explain, Dad simply put his hand on my leg, implying that I should keep quiet. In a non-argumentative manner he assured the farmer, "We'll make it right."

Turning around and going back to our barn, Dad said, "Take him a load of the alfalfa."

"The alfalfa!" I exclaimed, "Why, that's our best hay!"

"Yes," insisted Dad, "give him the alfalfa."

So we took the farmer the alfalfa hay. We didn't unload it in his field. Instead, we took it to his barn and put it up into his hayloft. And Dad's lesson has followed me through life.

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*Howard Fretz was a dairy farmer/churchman who so lived that his son, Lester C. Fretz, learned nonresistance in action. Lester is Secretary of the Board for Media Ministries.*

In a non-argumentative manner he assured the farmer, "We'll make it right."

# I chose to wash his feet

by Gregory K. Holmes

**A**SERIOUS ADVERSARY he was not. However, in the mind of a teenage boy, he came pretty close. He got lots of attention for his looks and wit. When it came down to it, I was jealous. What made it worse was that we were in the same youth group. The conflict was not open, but it was in my heart and mind. I knew I was not the only one who felt this way about him, so I felt justified in my hardened heart.

All of this came to a head when our youth pastor decided to have a foot washing service. We did it in a fashion where there was one basin that we passed around the room until everyone participated.

I do not remember who washed my feet, but I cannot forget the dilemma I faced. I chose to wash my adversary's feet. I remember saying/thinking words, asking for forgiveness from him and God.

After that night I could not look at him in the same way. I had followed Christ's example, and Christ had changed my heart.

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*Gregory K. Holmes is a member of the Grantham (Pa.) Brethren in Christ Church. He had a life-changing experience in a footwashing service that was conducted with his youth group a few years ago.*



# Our war-time experience

by Malinda Taylor

*An abridged version  
of a 2-page article in the  
Evangelical Visitor,  
October 9, 1939.*

**D**URING THE LAST YEAR of the World War (1918), while we were living in Lapeer County, Michigan, a campaign was on to sell Liberty Bonds to all the families. Some men came to our home, but my husband said that according to the teachings of the truth of the Gospel, we did not believe in war, and that to buy Liberty Bonds was to actually help the fighting.

One of the leading members of the group of men, who had no regard for God nor man, had made threats earlier. He tried to boycott us by going to the merchants in town and telling them not to buy any goods from our farm, and also not to sell any merchandise to us. He went so far as to tell our neighbors not to work for us. Bro. Taylor, not wishing to make any trouble, managed his crops and his work in such a way that he got along without the extra help. We did not raise as much corn as in other years.

There was a certain time set for every man

to register. One of our neighbors came at night and advised Mr. Taylor that he could register during the day, and that if he waited until night, there might be trouble. The next day we found out that some men were lying in wait for Bro. Taylor and finally when he did not turn up, they inquired, "Where is Taylor?"

Later on, my husband was summoned to appear before court to give an answer for being a Conscientious Objector. During the noon adjournment a man, walking by the group with which Bro. Taylor was standing, said, "If I had it to do, everybody would fight." Bro. Taylor answered, "If you were going to blot out sin with cannon and sword, where would you begin?" That man walked away without another word. Next morning my husband inquired of the Judge what the evidence or decision was against us. When husband returned home, the truth was revealed that there was nothing held against us.

But we had greater trials and testing to go

## A slap on the mouth

by Gerald Wingert

**W**orld War II was well under way when I was twelve years old, and by this time the "draft" was already in place. There were a number of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ students in our local consolidated grade school. One afternoon as we were being excused for recess, we congregated around the door and waited for the teacher to open the door. Some gentle pushing began behind me, and, to keep from being over-balanced I put my hand against the student in front of me. At that moment the teacher told me to return to my seat. I immediately responded by respectfully saying (so I thought), "I wasn't pushing, it was Dick." In a flash she reached around several students and soundly slapped me on the mouth. Needless to say, I was greatly humiliated, as I went to my seat while the rest were excused.

She came to my desk and gave a brief lecture. I can only recall one statement, which was, "You belong to a group of people who will not defend their country." I never told anyone, not even my parents, about the event. In later years I thought about the event and came to the conclusion that the slap was not so much for what I said, but it was a likely opportunity to express her displeasure regarding the peace community of which I was a part. I believe her feelings were intensified by the fact that her boyfriend had gone off to service in the army.

This event did not create negative feelings toward her. She was my teacher in grades 5, 6, and 8, and I regarded her as a good teacher. Fifty years later, on a Sunday morning, she came to the worship service at Air Hill, where I was pastor at the time. I also had the opportunity for an extended visit in her home, which was only three miles away. We talked about many things relating to school days, but not about the mouth-slapping episode.

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*Gerald Wingert was a school boy during World War II. Who he was and what his community believed made him painfully vulnerable to social disapproval. Years later he would understand Jesus' words, "And you will be hated by all because of my name" (Matt. 10:22).*



through, and the Lord knew what we needed during the summer. The threshing season came and we were not able to get a machine. The leader of the Vigilant Board said that he would be there when we threshed, meaning to make trouble. The Brethren of Mooretown were talking of coming with a full gang and a thrasher, but the time was not ripe to do this.

Shortly after Halloween, one night after the children were all in bed, we realized our home was being stoned. We had a frame house and both the upstairs and downstairs windows were being broken. The noise woke our little boy. A big stone, nearly ten pounds in weight, was hurled in, just missing him. He cried so hard that I believe the men heard and were frightened away. The noise stopped, and I could see no one as I opened the door and looked out into the beautiful night.

The man at the head of the mob was not satisfied until he could get hold of Bro. Taylor, and so a few weeks after the stoning of our house, one evening a mob of men came with their faces masked to hide their identity. They all got out of their car calling to my husband to come out. While I was absent from the room for a few minutes, an older man came and took hold of Bro. Taylor by the neck to take him out. My husband went with him without any resistance. Our children were crying as if their hearts would break at their father's leaving. While my heart was heavy and sore, I tried to console them as best I could.

When I went out, they had him in their car ready to leave. They had a pair of shears and cut one side of Bro. Taylor's hair, also gouged in his beard on one side. They took him to a lonely road, abused him, having him run and knocking him down unconscious a few times, then put some very ill-smelling stuff on his head, which caused sores. Finally, they left him—and he walked home.

**I**T WAS SO HUMILIATING to me that he had to go through all this. When I wrote a letter to my sister and her husband, Rev. and Mrs. Jonathan Lyons, telling them all about this, Bro. Lyons wrote, reminding us of our precious Savior being despised, forsaken and taken by cruel hands and made to suffer in shame and agony.

When the neighbors heard what was done to my husband, they were quite indignant about it. However, it brought the people to thinking more seriously of life, also convictions to live better lives. A rather rough young man, a thrasher, began to read the Testament

every day. [Some people said] that Mr. Taylor was the most religious man in that part of Michigan.

Another man, a well-to-do farmer but of a rough make-up, said to my husband that we did more than all the churches put together, for they all had their church people around them, but we stood alone, being isolated from our church people. We are thankful to say that the Lord was our strength.

We were now able to go ahead with our threshing—and this man who had threatened trouble was sick in bed, so we had no more trouble with him.

We finally had our sale, a large sale and everything went so good which was a great surprise to the auctioneer, who was also a preacher. He had heard so much and was fearful about coming, and had asked his congregation to pray for him. After the sale he came to Bro. Taylor and wondered what all this meant. Everything had gone far beyond his expectation, and he concluded with, "Surely the Lord has been with you."

Shortly after the sale a number of friends and neighbors came for a farewell gathering, among them was a Catholic couple. It surprised us when he got up at the close of this friendly gathering and said, "When I heard what they done to Walter, I said 'he had more religion than I.'"

I forgot to mention that while not giving to help the war, we did pay a certain amount to the Relief Fund and we were glad to do it to help relieve the suffering. While in these times of perplexity and distress, my only resort was to the Lord in prayer. There I found a sweet refuge and the joy of the Lord and His blessing far outweighed the trials and tears of persecution. My faith was strengthened and I will gladly suffer for Him who suffered the ignominious death on the cross for me.

May the Lord bless and strengthen the faith of all that would be true.

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*Malinda Taylor wrote a detailed account of her husband's harrowing experiences as a conscientious objector to war while farming in Michigan during the last year of World War I. Her account was published in the **Evangelical Visitor** on October 9, 1939, just as Germany was mopping up its blitzkrieg war against Poland at the outbreak of World War II.*

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# Theological Foundations for Brethren in Christ Core Values

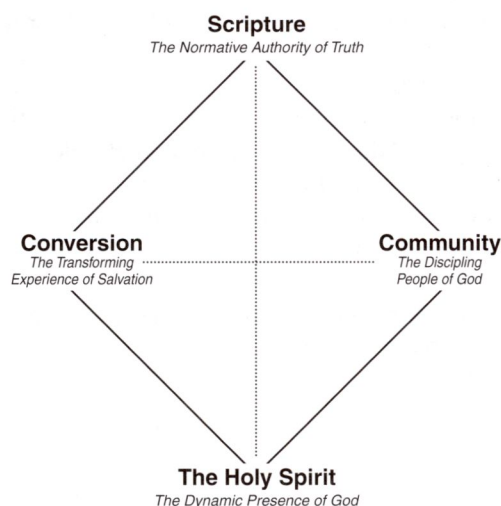
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by Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

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*The following article is adapted from the paper presented by Luke Keefer, Jr., and presented at the Consultation on Core Values held at Roxbury Camp in May 1999.*

**T**he pre-conference materials, especially *Reflections on a Heritage*, were most helpful to me as I approached this assignment. Consequently, I have decided to pursue a model which underscores four foundational convictions: conversion, community, Scripture, and the Spirit. Visually the model looks like this:



I want to make several observations, first, about the model itself before undertaking an exposition of each theological foundation. The two core issues for us are conversion and community. We have always been a synthetic people. At our beginning that synthesis was piety and obedience. It still represents our

outlook and defines what is unique about us. We have equal commitments to both conversion and community. That is why we cannot emotionally embrace traditions that magnify one at the expense of the other. We hold both at once, admitting that this creates tension in our theology, but also insisting that no theology can be biblical if it does not achieve such a balance.

Scripture is placed above these because it is the authority over both conversion and community. We approach Scripture functionally rather than dogmatically. We assume the truthfulness of Scripture rather than trying to prove its reliability. Our real regard for Scripture is manifested when we deal with issues of faith and practice. It is then clear that the Bible is the only normative authority over both our understanding of salvation and of the church.

Underlying our individual and corporate experience of God is the reality of the Holy Spirit. We confess that the experience of salvation and the life of the church are both miraculous events. The Spirit is the key to both new birth and new community.

There is a dotted line between Scripture and Spirit because these two are closely related to each other. This is not because we have been greatly concerned over such issues as the "inner word" and the "outer word" as some were in the early days of both Anabaptism and Pietism. Again we embrace both at



once, and see them working conjointly rather than being in tension with each other. Another way of saying this is that we do not see Scripture and Spirit as two different authorities for theology. Scripture is the authority over the questions of truth, while the Spirit is the dynamic source of God's life. Both are equally necessary, but they do not have the same function.

#### **Exposition of the Four Theological Foundations**

**CONVERSION**—The Brethren in Christ were formed in a revival, and that has left a permanent mark upon our collective soul. We believe humans are sinners by nature and need to be born again to enter the kingdom of God. We believe that Spirit-produced conviction, repentance, and faith precede one's experience of forgiveness, rebirth, and transformation. This experience of saving grace realigns all relationships: to God, to oneself, to fellow human beings, and to the world order in which we live. Jesus Christ is encountered as both Savior and Lord. The reborn Christian is subject to the life of discipleship as presented in the gospels. He or she is also working in the power of the resurrection as demonstrated in the book of Acts and explained in the New Testament Epistles.

This is a rather radical view of conversion. It means we have difficulty believing that one has been "translated out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of light" (Col. 1:13) if they have little interest in spiritual matters, are reluctant to dismiss sinful practices, and resist the church's attempts to disciple them. We expect those who profess faith in baptism to be people who are profoundly changed by their relationship to Jesus Christ.

We also believe that new birth (conversion) results in sanctification. To grow in the Lord is to be changed in matters great and small in all areas of life. This involves both natural development and dramatic events where one's life is marked in significant ways by the Spirit of God. Our outlook on the Christian life is marked on one hand by an optimism of grace and on the other by a serious commitment to Jesus Christ and the work of the Kingdom of God. We know that the struggles with sin, Satan, the cares of life, and the fear of death are all very real, but we refuse to believe that the grace of Jesus Christ is unable to defeat these foes. Consequently, we avoid those theologies which accept sin as

the regrettable normalcy in the life of a Christian.

We know that everyone begins the Christian adventure as a "babe in Christ" and that maturity in faith rarely happens within a few years. But the set of the sails can be to the full extent in a small boat as well as in a large ship. We encourage wholehearted love for God at every stage of development, measuring discipleship by commitment to one's level of ability. But we are not content to settle for the lowest common denominator as a measure for Christian discipleship. It is our conviction that Christian movements that settle for easy terms of discipleship seldom produce mature Christians.

The earliest Brethren had a high view of conversion. They expected "lots of spade-work" to precede a public declaration of faith. We, their descendants, want to espouse the same beliefs, but we have several influences which have modified us. First, in the last century we have accepted childhood conversions in large numbers. Inevitably this has reduced the levels of knowledge and commitment which are required for faith. We have also endorsed evangelistic methods that aim for immediate results. Less preparation of the soil often results in shallow root systems in the seedlings. In addition, we desire to reach many people for Christ. There is always a danger that salvation in popular terms may be a discounted sale item.

In theory, we try to compensate for these defects by assigning more to be done in the discipling/nurturing process which follows professions of faith. And there are churches that do this well, but it requires intentional planning and rigorous effort. There is always the danger that we will neglect these discipling ministries by assuring ourselves that, at any rate, "these people are now saved." We must never forget that the great commission (Matt. 28:19, 20) calls us not to gaining professions of faith but to the making of disciples. We should be uneasy with any doctrine of salvation which falls short of making people disciples of Jesus Christ.

**COMMUNITY**—The earliest Brethren already had community before they encountered conversion. So it was not something they had to decide to add to the personal act of faith. They thus avoided the pitfall that afflicts many Western Christians today, who adhere to the slogan "Jesus definitely but the Church maybe." Our heritage has taught us

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and new  
community.*



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will test our  
fidelity to the  
Word of God.  
People educated  
by our public  
schools and  
steeped in the  
popular media  
will come to us  
with a prejudice  
against the  
authority of  
Scripture.*

that salvation is both an individual and a corporate event. The same baptism that declares our faith in Jesus also commits us to the fellowship of the saints. We love not only the one who begot us but also those begotten by Him. (1 John. 5:1)

We know that it is biologically possible to produce babies apart from a family structure. But our culture is teaching us how dangerous this is to everyone involved. Existence itself is threatened, and children thus produced often are socially dysfunctional. It is the same in the spiritual realm. It is scandalously unchristian to produce converts who are not tied into a spiritual community. A conversionist theology and an evangelistic program demand a high doctrine of the church. Converts need spiritual parents and bonded siblings. Or, to change the metaphor, the Christian life is a pilgrimage that has recognized leaders/guides and committed fellow travelers.

Evangelism itself depends upon a church which is equipped to do it. In a very real sense the Christian community is prior to conversion, for there must be ambassadors who know the terms whereby people can be at peace with God.

In addition, the church is the community of salvation in that it helps all its members to work out their salvation throughout all the phases of the Christian life. It must be a supporting, loving, caring fellowship. It has the responsibility to instruct in Scripture and to nurture spiritual growth. It must model piety and administer discipline. The community provides for leadership development and ministry involvement as it recognizes and enhances peoples' spiritual gifts.

In order to present all people perfect in Christ (Col. 1:28), the community must give attention to all things Jesus taught his disciples by word, deed, and example. Discipleship is essential to salvation; it is not an optional add-on to conversion.

On the other hand, community cannot exist apart from conversion. There is no church unless people are being united to Christ by living faith. And the communal life of the church stands itself in need of converting grace. For discipline can become legalism, nurture can become moralism, and the life of the church can become mere cultural Christianity. The community must be kept vital both by the revival and reformation of its corporate life, and by the addition of new members through evangelistic growth.

It is for reasons like these that the Brethren in Christ must approach the next millennium with equal commitments to both conversion and community. We dare not elevate one above the other nor divide them into rigid compartments. Biblically and historically they are companions and not competitors. Neglect one and the other also suffers. We must keep these foundations in synthesis as we minister in the future. In order to do so, we must strengthen our community commitment, since it has not had the articulated effort in the last quarter century as church growth has.

**SCRIPTURE**—We like to keep our theologizing to a minimum. When we do engage in serious theology, we prefer biblical theology to systematic theology. We resonate with the spirit of the founders of our denomination, who wished to stick to the plain teaching of Scripture, using the biblical vocabulary as the vehicle of expression. We have virtually ignored the academic approach to theology, especially when its spokespersons have tried to get "behind the text of Scripture" to derive a meaning contrary to the printed text itself. We believe the Bible as received by the church universal is the revealed Word of God. We devote our primary energies to understanding its message and to obeying its mandates.

Even if one considers the most emotional church issues of the last half century—issues such as paid pastoral ministry, divorce and remarriage, patterns of non-conformity, and women in ministry—it is clear the issues have revolved around the understanding of Scripture. In the end, the church believed the intent of Scripture justified a departure from our tradition. At the same time we have stood our ground on issues like the doctrine of Christ, the necessity of Christ for salvation, and the question of homosexuality. We have sensed that the pressures for change in these areas are socially driven and are not a matter of legitimate biblical interpretation.

We must nourish this denominational commitment to Scripture as we enter the next century. For the more we engage our culture the more we will feel the pressure to conform to the spirit of the times. And our very success in evangelism will test our fidelity to the Word of God. People educated by our public schools and steeped in the popular media will come to us with a prejudice against the authority of Scripture. If there is



any weakness in our fidelity to the Bible, our converts will convert us to relativism rather than us discipling them to the mind of Christ.

This goes much deeper than our doctrinal pronouncement about Scripture. A number one concern in ministerial training must be the recommendation of schools that have a high view of Scripture. Reading, studying, and meditating upon Scripture must be prominent in our lives. What we say about Scripture will not count as much as the practical application it has in our lives as a body.

We know from history that Christian experience can become so subjective that it neglects or negates the voice of Scripture. And we know that the church can become a traditional institution whose decisions rival the authority of the Word of God or even blatantly contradict the Bible. So we must continue to hold to the supreme authority of Scripture over both conversion and community. Here is the clear and certain voice of God addressed to our fundamental needs. Here is the light of eternity that illumines our path to God. If we move from this voice or from this light, there is nothing but the confession of voices and the darkness of deception.

**THE HOLY SPIRIT**—Paul said it so well: on this side of the cross and resurrection, we cannot know the Christ of incarnate flesh. We know him only by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is both the Father's promise to and the Son's presence in our lives and churches. It is clear that the early church believed no one was a Christian unless his faith was sealed by the Holy Spirit. And the early church knew its very existence and ministry depended upon the Holy Spirit.

I believe this truth is crucial to the future of the denomination. Conversion is a supernatural act wrought by the Holy Spirit. The church is a supernatural community brought into existence by the Spirit, who energizes its worship, its witness, its fellowship, its unity, and its love and compassion. Without the Spirit, nothing happens! Satan will not tremble at our finely-worded articles on conversion and community. But Satan's kingdom will suffer ruin if the Holy Spirit possesses us, thrusting us out to bring lives to Christ and instilling a passion in our souls for the reality of God's Kingdom community. ▶

Pentecost must be more than a day in the church calendar. It must be that overshadow-

ing presence of the Most High whose touch converts, heals, delivers, comforts, and empowers all God's people. Both the challenges that threaten the health of the denomination and the opportunities that call us to wider ministry argue for a strong emphasis upon the Spirit. He is the one Jesus gave to be with us to the ends of the earth and the completion of time.

#### **A concluding commendation**

Now let me close with a commendation. I am most appreciative of the emphasis upon prayer, which showed up on all of the five pre-conference core values statements. This has been a conspicuous element of recent General Conferences, bishops' newsletters, and church leaders' directives through the *Evangelical Visitor* and other communications. For Jesus said the Father would give the Spirit to those who asked (Luke 11:13); and in the book of Acts, the Spirit fills the church when it is at prayer.

I firmly believe that if the Brethren in Christ are to be of value to God in the next century, it will depend upon our commitment to the foundational theological connections that have been developed in this model. We can expand the model by a constellation of core values, which make these convictions more definitive and more user friendly.

Conversion and community are something like Siamese twins, organically joined in a way that defies separation. They are ordered by one functioning mind—the Scriptures. And they are kept alive by one beating heart—the Holy Spirit. I believe a church so constituted has a future in the twenty-first century.

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*Luke Keefer, Jr., is a member of the faculty of Ashland (Ohio) Theological Seminary.*

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Spirit, nothing  
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...Satan's  
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possesses us,  
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to Christ, and  
instilling a  
passion in  
our souls for  
the reality of  
God's Kingdom  
community.*



# faith for the future

by David L. Hall

I need to begin by asking a question I've quickly grown tired of hearing: "How are you preparing for Y2K?" That seems to be the buzz question for many people this year. Response to the questions covers the gamut from paranoia to blind optimism.

I am most bothered by those in the Christian community who are taking this as an opportunity to spread a sensationalism that is both loosely and poorly based on the Bible. The "Christian" Reconstructionist, Gary North, has a web site that amounts to little more than spiritual terrorism. Tim LaHaye has co-authored a serial novel, *Left Behind*, that is little more than sensational hype (it is certainly not based on good biblical interpretation). It sometimes looks as if the highest levels of concern and the most severe predictions for trouble are coming from those claiming to be conservative (self-understood as *faithful*) Christians.

This, of course, feeds right into the worst predictions that come from secular technophiles. Not everyone who has technological sophistication is running scared, but there are those who have already put deposits down on sites where they can pitch a tent or park an RV in late 1999. This is because of a worst-case scenario panic: as soon as the old, large main-frame computers read "00" when the year 2000 rolls around, the electricity grid will go dead, businesses will fail and the stock market will plummet. As food becomes scarce, panic and looting will set in. The world will be in chaos and the unprepared will be in grave jeopardy.

So how is one to be prepared? Some people have tried to figure out exactly

how many pounds of lentils and Kraft macaroni and cheese their families will need if computer failures disrupt the country's food distribution system. They are learning how to preserve potable water. They are buying generators and stock-piling gasoline. They are planning to cash in their bank accounts and savings and buy gold. Some survivalists are starting to worry that hideaways stocked with bottled water may not be secluded enough. One man was quoted in *Newsweek* as saying, "If people start moving out of cities, they could wind up looking around. I don't want to hear anybody saying, 'Hey, that guy's got food!'" He plans to head for a national forest with a rifle and basic survival skills.

Even with educated guesses there is no way we can know for sure what will actually happen. If there should be extended power outages because of electric failure, it is hard to visualize the result; we are so dependent on electricity. The same thing with financial stability—even a major dip in the market would be nothing compared to mass unemployment and extended recession.

And what *if* catastrophe occurs? Jerry Falwell has said that January 1, 2000, *could be* a visitation of God's wrath: "He may be preparing to confound our language, to jam our communications, scatter our efforts, and judge us for our sin and rebellion against his lordship." What if God allows all our acquired self-sufficiency to come crashing down in a judgment on this world's growing autonomy and immorality? The truth is...on that level there is *nothing* we can do about it. Fac-

ing reality means dealing with that on the level of our basic values and belief system.

The real question about the future, whether it concerns the year 2000 or anything else, is where our hopes lie. I am grieved and disappointed when so many Christians seem either to be getting on the survivalist bandwagon or working up a panic about the future. You see, the Bible makes it clear that the *future* is the Christian's hope. Let me give some reminders why that is so.

I want to do that by, first, referring to an acronym some doomsayers are using: TEOTWAWKI—*The End Of The World As We Know It*. This idea of the world ending is, understandably, one of utter fear—for those whose hopes are rooted in this world. The biblical answer to this, and the foundation of Christian faith, is that the world as we know it has *already* ended! This is the difference between faith and the "natural" way of seeing this world (which can be illustrated by another acronym: WYSIWYG—*What You See Is What You Get*).

It is tragic that too many Christians have not yet come to understand that when Jesus died on the cross it was not only for "our sins." Jesus' death was God's verdict on the whole way of life lived in this world apart from God's sovereignty. Paul told the Colossians: "And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross" (2:15). Some secularists today call for "a new world order." The biblical message of Christian faith is that Jesus brought a new order into being almost 2000 years ago through his



death and resurrection. The old world of WYSIWYG was destroyed. TEOT-WAWKI happened long before this current Y2K scare.

I'd like to help you see this so thoroughly that you will not escape it when you read the Bible. It's most explicit in the Epistles, but once you learn to see it, it's everywhere. Christian faith means believing that the world changed 2000 years ago. Christian faith sees that Jesus changed time (and the calendar division, B.C. and A.D., is an explicit illustration of a spiritual reality).

Try to get the big-picture impact of these verses: "But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son" (Gal 4:4). "And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment" (Eph 1:9-10a). "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son" (Heb. 1:1-2a). "[Christ] has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26). "He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake" (1 Peter 1:20).

And what was the result of Jesus changing time forever by having entered it? Again, note these Scriptures: "For this world in its present form is passing away" (1 Cor. 7:31b). "So we fix our eyes not on what is seen but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal" (2 Cor. 4:18). "From now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view...if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation;

the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Cor. 5:16,17). "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11-13). "For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come" (Heb. 13:14).

These verses from the Epistles give the Christian outlook from the positive perspective. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gave the negative side—what those who see the truth of God's kingdom do not do: "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own" (Matt 6:24, 31-34).


That is why, in the Old Testament, God told Israel they were not to try to figure out this life by looking to horoscopes or going to occultists who try to tell the future. Any mind-set that is preoccupied with this life in this world is an attitude that dismisses who God wants to be in our world and in our lives. This is why John writes in his first

letter: "Do not love the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him... The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever" (2:15, 17).

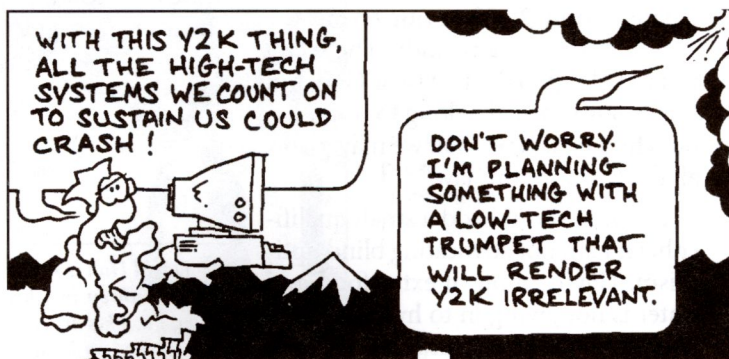
But what does this mean? Fundamentally it means having a changed mind. That is why Christians both begin their new life and live their new lives through repentance. People who

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trust Jesus are to have a changed mind about what life means in this world. Either we believe that this world is the main thing (which is natural for people who are spiritually dead) or we do not. If we do not believe this world is the main thing, we need to show it through our value systems and our behavior.

 **Pontius' Puddle**

Bulletins and newsletters reprinting "Pontius Puddle" must pay \$10 for each use to Joel Kauffman, 111 Carter Road, Goshen, IN 46526.





The opposite of not believing this world is the main thing, is letting something like the Y2K scare or the millennial doomsayers cause us to live in either fear or an attempted self-sufficiency.

I am sickened to see *Christianity Today* running advertisements by companies using the hype and fright to make money. There was a big one-page ad for buying gold in the January 11, 1999, issue. That's in addition to ads for books and internet addresses which enflame the issue. Sam Brubaker expressed the true concern in our denominational magazine, the *Evangelical Visitor* (December 1998 issue). In an article titled "The Y2K Opportunity," he writes, "I feel more concern about how un-Christianly will Christians behave than about how badly will our machines fail." We need to remember where our true hope is. We need to practice embracing the values that we say are the most real.

The Assemblies of God (Springfield, Mo.) is one denomination that has given an official pronouncement about the "future-fright" threatening people today. I would like to commend it to you: "Needless fear and alarmist tactics over the Y2K issue and the approaching turn of the millennium are directly in conflict with the teaching of our Lord."

The AG admonished members not to adopt a secular approach to Y2K. "We encourage our people to not engage in activities such as hoarding food, withdrawing money from banks, believing doomsday scenarios, or expecting the economic, political, and social collapse of Western civilization when the clock strikes January 1, 2000," the denomination stated.

The AG urged Christians to focus on sharing their faith with those who are uncertain about the future. "We have the message of hope from our Lord who has taught us to 'Fear not,'" the general council said. "Rather than fearing the collapse of computers or society, the Scriptures call upon us to fear God's wrath. The good news is that God's wrath needs never be experienced when we place our trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord" (reported in *Christianity Today*, p. 60, January 11, 1999).

On a light note, if you want to be a

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## **"Needless fear and alarmist tactics over the Y2K issue and the approaching turn of the millennium are directly in conflict with the teaching of our Lord."**

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technical millennialist and you're worried about God doing something BIG every 2000 years, the true year 2000 has already come and gone according to the best scholarship, which puts Jesus' birth at 4 B.C. Of course, that doesn't change the way computers have been programmed.

But where do North American Christians get the idea that life is supposed to be one non-interrupted ascent into bigger and better? One writer speaks of "the myth of continuity," the belief that things are going to march forward in an unbroken line of prosperity and affluence. The truth is, life is always being disrupted by things we did not count on. It may be that Y2K precipitates a crisis, but it won't be the first crisis in history—and it won't be the last. Many Christians thought the world would end in the year 1000. They were all wrong. Perhaps we should all adopt Deuteronomy 29:29 as our text as the year 1999 draws to an end: "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law."

Maybe I should add a small qualifier here: I am not advocating blind optimism. Having a bit of extra food and water is not giving in to hysteria. Even having a small generator is not panic—

such a thing could be useful in a major ice storm apart from the Y2K scare. All I'm saying is that people whose hopes are in Jesus should not panic. Fear and survivalist mentalities are mutually exclusive to Christian faith.

Let's close by paying attention to 2 Peter 3:3-13. "First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, 'Where is this "coming" he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.' But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

"But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

"But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

"Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives, as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness."

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*David Hall is senior pastor of the Elizabethtown Brethren in Christ Church in Elizabethtown, Pa. This article is adapted from a sermon he preached on January 10, 1999.*



## HONDURAS

# "There were 120 people at the midweek prayer meeting."

by Eugene Madeira

I could not believe my eyes. There were 120 people at the midweek prayer meeting of the Colonia Kennedy Church. Pastor Marcos Navarro asked me to give a brief presentation on prayer which I was happy to do. After that they divided into small groups of five persons each and prayed for 30 minutes. Everyone in the room had the opportunity to share prayer requests, and we held hands and prayed for every person in the group. I had not seen this since I was a teenager when my own church conducted its prayer meetings in the same way. (That church today has three services with 800 in attendance and it still has prayer meetings touching every person's needs.)

A praying church is a growing church. This is not a cliché, but a proven visible fact at the Colonia Kennedy Church in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. This church has grown from eight persons when Marcos Navarro became pastor to 300 with two services of 150 each. Prayer is the reason. Another reason is that the pastor takes an interest in his people. He goes out and shakes hands and talks to every person who rides the church bus, purchased to bring people in for the

services. The bus has two different routes: one in the morning and one in the evening.

I rode the bus both Sundays and was impressed with the driver. He lives in the house next to the Brethren in Christ center in Tegucigalpa. I attended one of his ten cell groups and had another major surprise: there were nine young men and three young ladies in this cell group. Pastor Marcos has the ability to attract young men to the Lord's service and work. One young man led the Bible study which was held before the cell group had prayer time.

My wife attended a cell group with Yolanda Herrera and was equally impressed with the Bible study material used by that group. They have ten cell groups of 12 each which subdivide when they grow beyond 12. I attended one cell group next door to the church. There were eight men and three women in attendance, all young people. Notice the ratio of men to women. Many of our churches are comprised of mostly women, but not the Colonia Kennedy Church.

Another thing that impressed me at the Colonia Kennedy Church was the care shown for those who were sick. Not only did they pray for them in all the services and cell groups, but these same young people that I saw in one cell group visited the sick. I spent over an hour visiting Fabio in the hospital and witnessed a procession of a dozen people stopping by to see him, pray for him, and encourage him. I



Pastor and Mrs. Marcos Navarro



Sunday morning, and a bus full of people headed for Colonia Kennedy Brethren in Christ Church in Honduras.

noticed that Pastor Navarro wasn't in a hurry. It gave me an opportunity to share my experience on the value of suffering from 2 Corinthians.

Pastor Marcos Navarro is teaching financial responsibility. The congregation contributed over 5,000 lempiras a month to the national church budget. This is a tithe of the tithe. Pastor Navarro has rejected the idea of the tithe being for the pastor, but rather being directed to the budget. This system has been abused in Honduras and is the reason so many haven't given tithes in the past. But now they are tithing. Pastor Navarro described how he and his wife received gifts before and after the birth of their daughter Ruth Elizabeth. They paid a tithe from these gifts based on the total value of the gifts received. Marcos sets an example of giving. He doesn't just preach it, he practices it.

Marcos believes in helping other churches grow. They have bought 20,000 bricks to build an enlarged church in nearby Los Piños. The foundations have already been dug. The church they envision in Los Piños is a church big enough to house 1,000 people. They project developing a dozen churches along the highway that has been built around the city and they plan on buying land while it is inexpensive. The first people to buy land get it at the best price.

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Gene and Ruth Madeira give their time and expertise to assist during short-term stints in the ministries of the Brethren in Christ churches in Latin America. Here they share their observations of the Brethren in Christ church in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, which they visited earlier this year while working with World Hunger Funds. The Madeiras are members of the Lancaster Brethren in Christ Church in Lancaster, Pa.





# Hurricane Mitch relief effort

by Eugene Madeira

**T**HE MEMORIES of Hurricane Mitch will not soon be forgotten. Months later they are still vivid—the cries of people being swept downstream hanging on tree branches, or debris of their homes. The memory of families who refused to leave their homes only to have them collapse in a landslide or disappear under rising water, with people standing on their roofs crying for help. In Tegucigalpa, six riverside communities disappeared. When you look at where they used to be you only see a sand bar, or a beach which looks like nothing had ever been built on it. The number of riverside communities and businesses buried under tons of rocks and sand has yet to be estimated. A whole valley of former melon farms is covered with six feet of rock and sand never to be cultivated again. Thousands of jobs were lost. In Nicaragua the Volcano Las Casitas did the same thing—burying whole communities and farms.

Relief efforts have been ongoing ever since Hurricane Mitch hit Honduras and the northeastern part of Nicaragua in October 1998. During January and February 1999, Eugene and Ruth Madeira spent six weeks in that area assessing the damage and making recommendations for the allocation of Brethren in Christ World Hunger Funds.

In April 1999, Tim Zimmerman, at the request of Brethren in Christ World Missions, went to Honduras to do further follow-up work with relief efforts. Tim grew up in Honduras, the son of missionary parents, so is familiar with the country and culture.

The reports by the Madeiras and Tim give a glimpse of the devastation and a sense of the immense task still to be done in these two countries. We also catch the spirit of the church as it rises above significant loss and disruption. The Madeiras are members of the Lancaster Brethren in Christ Church and Tim is a member of the Dillsburg Brethren in Christ Church, both in Pennsylvania.

But then there are the miracles of God's deliverance. In Pasmata, Reynaldo Hernandez, one of Marshall Poe's teachers, was saved when the wall of water coming toward the pastor's house where he was staying divided, went around the house, and rejoined farther down the mountain. Pastors testified how God protected them as they waded in deep water helping to rescue flooded families in Viejo. Many of our Brethren in Christ members living in the Choluteca area were employed on these farms. They are without work, and have no jobs, no opportunities to earn a living. The Brethren in Christ Hunger Fund along with MCC food shipments have provided them with food for work. Initially, they worked at cleaning up debris from city streets, clearing out six feet of mud that filled businesses and stores that were left standing. Rural displaced persons were given work building temporary shelters made of large sheets of black plastic. Others began to reconstruct roads so that trucks bringing relief supplies could get to the villages.

All crops had been destroyed in all of Honduras. In Nicaragua it was the northwest corners of the country that suffered destruction. (A district is the same as our conference.)

	Honduras	Nicaragua	Totals
# of BIC districts suffering loss	6	2	8
# of BIC churches affected	50	18	68
# of BIC families	1,628	474	2,102
# of persons (incl. non-BIC)	10,093	2,146	12,239

In both countries food was distributed in December and January. The money spent in the first two distributions amounted to about \$2.30 a person. In Nicaragua food was available locally because areas not affected by Hurricane Mitch had good crops. But in Honduras it was a different story: 90 percent of the country's crops were lost. That is



*Opposite page: Temporary housing located amid rubble from the flood.*

*Right: Rafael Arauz, president of the Honduras Brethren in Christ General Conference (second from right) receives the documents for land donated for the El Encuentro Church from the donor and his wife. On the far right is missionary Nate Bert.*



why MCC shipments of food to the country have been a vital part in saving lives.

Aid is being channeled to buy land and provide believers in four Honduran communities a place to rebuild their homes: in Choluteca, Danli, Liraqui and Espinal. In Nicaragua, rebuilding houses is taking place in Los Encuentros, El Espino, El Becerro and El Sauce. In these eight communities, the situation is as follows:

Honduras		Nicaragua	
Homes destroyed	67	Homes destroyed	34
Partial Damage	46	Partial damage	84
Houses in danger	17	Houses in danger	0

In both countries chain saws have been purchased and lumber has been cut from the hundreds of big trees that were felled by the hurricane.

In many communities in Honduras, the poor have no place to stay except on the mountainside where landslides are always a danger, by the roadside, or on the banks of rivers because the rich own all the best land. Honduras has never had land reform.

So land is being purchased and new communities are being established. Lots are being provided as sites for a Brethren in Christ church building, a clinic, or other community needs. To provide for community ownership of the program the following principles are followed:

1. Local participation takes place at every stage of the project.
2. Beneficiaries do as much as humanly possible for themselves.
3. Training is provided in care and maintenance of chain saws.
4. Materials are of local source and production (example: felled trees are cut up for lumber).
5. Community designs the land use plan.

The method being used to provide accountability is to provide vouchers so that tools, roofing tin, cement and supplies are picked up by the beneficiary at the local hardware store. No money is given either for food or building supplies.

The food for work program will be supplemented with seed to allow rural people to plant corn, beans, rice, and soybeans. The rains begin in May and harvest comes in August. Pray for good rains, good crops and good harvests as the food for work program will then be phased out. Since housing reconstruction is only now getting started, our assistance in helping rebuild communities and homes will continue until November 2001.

Rural people who lost animals will be helped to rebuild their stock: chickens, pigs, and goats, on the condition that they share their offspring with neighbors who don't have any chickens, pigs, or goats. People receiving animals will be given instruction on how to prevent disease from killing them.

These services—emergency food, food for work, seeds, rebuilding homes—are offered to communities, along with an evangelistic outreach, providing a ministry of hope through the salvation Jesus Christ purchased for us by his death on the cross and God validated by His resurrection from the dead. Pray for the evangelism and Christian witness that is a vital part of all our rebuilding efforts: to create a new Honduras, as well as a new Nicaragua.

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*Gene and Ruth Madeira spent six weeks in Honduras and Nicaragua earlier this year, assessing the damage of Hurricane Mitch and giving recommendations as to how the Brethren in Christ World Hunger Funds should be allocated.*



by Tim Zimmerman

# So much work to be done!



*A few of the displaced people living in a community set up by the Red Cross.*

Each time I travel to Honduras, I feel like I am going home. I lived in Honduras most of my childhood. I love the people, the food, the land, the pace of life. Recently, I was sent by Brethren in Christ World Missions to Honduras for two and one-half weeks to check on some rural areas and the relief effort going on in those locations.

I had heard and read many details of the problems in Honduras in November 1998 caused by Hurricane Mitch, but not until I went to Honduras in April and saw the effects and heard the stories first-hand, did I begin to understand the magnitude of the disaster. Much of the fertile agricultural areas were either covered by several feet of debris or left desolate without any topsoil. People lost homes, family members, and friends. Jobs were lost for many, many people. Despite these horrible losses, I met many people who are grateful for what they have and for the help that is being given. Many of the people continue to worship God with great fervor and to have faith that God will provide for their needs. Let me tell you some of the stories.

I had the opportunity to travel to some very rural areas. In one community where there is no electricity, I walked alongside a pastor in the very dark evening, as he announced with a megaphone a special church service.

As we walked the distance of about one mile to the church building, using only the light of a small kerosene lantern, the people came out of their homes and followed along. In the service that evening, members from another evangelical church were openly welcomed by the Brethren in Christ members. The worship was lively and enthusiastic, not giving a hint of the many problems these people have experienced.

During my travels, I passed by temporary tent communities set up by the Red Cross. In one of them there must have been more than 200 tents. I have no way of knowing how many people were living there, probably thousands. It is already six months since the hurricane. What a long time to live in those conditions! I was told stories by one family of the raging river during the hurricane, and the helplessness they felt as they watched things floating down the swollen river—cars, trucks, all kinds of things—and worst of all, people holding onto large, uprooted trees.

In one village I stayed with a family who has no income because the flood had destroyed all the fields in that area. This man had worked as a supervisor in the fields for a large foreign company that grew and exported cantaloupes and watermelons. After the fields were destroyed, the company planted its crops in other areas of

the country leaving many, many people in this fairly large town unemployed and unable to earn a living.

I left Honduras with mixed feelings. I enjoyed my time visiting with the people and worshiping in the churches. I was pleased to see the amount of relief supplies—food and reconstruction supplies—that had been distributed through Brethren in Christ World Missions, MCC, and other organizations. As my airplane taxied down the runway to leave from Honduras, I was encouraged to see an aircraft hangar filled with relief supplies yet to be distributed. I felt helpless leaving when there is still so much work to be done.

Remember in your prayers Nathan Bert and the Honduran Brethren in Christ Church supervisors and pastors as they try to discern the continuing needs of the people and distribute supplies accordingly.

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*Tim Zimmerman grew up as the son of missionary parents in Honduras. With knowledge of the language and culture, he was a good candidate for Brethren in Christ World Missions to send in April to assess the effectiveness of the relief effort in Honduras. Following is a report of his observations. Tim and his family are members of the Dillsburg Brethren in Christ Church in Dillsburg, Pa.*





## My testimony

*Rev. Brilliant Sibanda, a member of the Brethren in Christ Church in Zimbabwe and graduate of the Theological College of Zimbabwe, has been awarded a one-year leadership training scholarship at the University of Western Cape in South Africa.*

I am married and blessed with two children, a boy and a girl. I was born in 1968 on the 8th of January. My father died when I was two years old. My father, a God-fearing man, also fellowshiped with the Brethren in Christ. When I was growing up and in my teenage years, I went to Sunday school and church services. I was baptized in the Brethren in Christ Church in Zimbabwe.

As a young man, growing up in a Christian community, I liked Christian activities, like Bible quiz competition and attending youth camps. In 1993 the Lord called me into full-time ministry. I tried to source funds for my theological training, but all was in vain until Brethren in Christ Bishop, Martin Senda, applied for a scholarship for me to Brethren in Christ World Missions. By God's hand this scholarship sponsored me for three years at the Theological College of Zimbabwe. After graduating from TCZ on the 30th of March 1996, I was asked by the Nguboyenja Brethren in Christ Church in the city of Bulawayo to work with them as their full-time pastor, which I was delighted to accept. This was a great day in my life, the day that I had longed for since the Lord confirmed the sense of calling in my heart.

In 1997, I was among other Brethren in Christ persons who were licensed as ministers. In August 1998 at the Zimbabwe General Conference I was ordained as a full-time minister of the Brethren in Christ Church in Zimbabwe.

I would like to thank the Lord for his guidance and blessing in ministry. I pray that he gives me strength to remain obedient to his Word and to his higher calling, as I commit myself to his service. I

pray that he will cleanse my heart from sin, pride, irritations, and anything that would grieve or hinder the Holy Spirit flowing through me.

## I'm H-A-P-P-Y

*Peter and Cheryl Guinther arrived at Nahumba Mission in Choma, Zambia, in March 1999. They are serving as host/hostess and as financial secretary for the mission. They are members of the Big Valley Brethren in Christ Church in Belleville, Pa.*

Cheryl and I must keep reminding ourselves of two things. We are still looking at this new setting with western eyes, and the physical needs we see are not an end in themselves, but a means to the end of ministering Jesus Christ. When we walk through local compounds, our immediate thoughts are of compassion for the children growing up in such poverty. It is poverty we see, but we also see smiles, and hear singing, and we realize these people are not as poor as our first thoughts might have told us. Little James, who is knee-high and wearing a baseball cap and blue pajamas, came around the corner of the church on Sunday evening with the other children singing, "I'm H-A-P-P-Y! I'm H-A-P-P-Y!" (the song Esther Miller taught them at Bible Club), and the sight just melted me to my knees. My western mindset says, "These people can't be so happy with the little they have."

## "Ishmael" groups

*Jay and Judy Smith have been involved in Muslim ministry in London since 1992. Jay teaches apologetics to volunteers from Operation Mobilization and to various university groups. The Smiths are members of the Perkiomen Valley Brethren in Christ Church in Collegeville, Pa.*

Some of you may remember that since 1995 Dr. Elsie Maxwell and I have been putting on three-day "Ishmael My Brother" conferences for Christian university students. Out of those weekends have evolved one-day intensive "Ish-

mael" seminars on Islam held on various university campuses around Britain. On Saturday I am off to California for ten days to use that same format for the first time in the U.S. In all of the "Ishmael" conferences and seminars we have asked the Christian students to make contact and initiate relationships with their Muslim counterparts as a means of further evangelistic opportunities.

We are now finally seeing fruit from that endeavour with "Ishmael" groups beginning in a number of universities here in Britain. A former German student of mine, Anne Treiber, a veteran of Speaker's Corner, came up with the idea of bringing these groups together in a concerted effort. The committee for the "Ishmael groups" met for the first time a few weeks ago at Kings College on the Strand here in London. We decided that the "Ishmael groups" would be used as a vehicle for prayer, outreach, understanding, and revival specifically aimed at Muslims on our campuses.

We were pleasantly surprised to find that there are now fifteen colleges in Britain with "Ishmael" groups. And to think that the idea was only conceived two months ago! What's more, of the fifteen groups, half have already set up regular discussions with Muslim students on their campuses, some on a weekly basis, others over a longer period of time. This will certainly make an impact on Islam here in Britain in the long run. We prayed for the various groups and some of the upcoming meetings, but felt indeed that the Lord had his hand in bringing together so many students from across these isles to stand firm for that which they believe. They are already coming up with difficult questions, so we have initiated an "Ishmael Newsgroup" to deal with the many questions and prayer requests evolving out of these discussions.

These Christian students are on "the front lines" in the battle with Islam, and need your prayer. Therefore, please lift up the students at the various universities and teaching hospitals. I know the Lord has many adventures waiting for them as they involve themselves with their Muslim friends on their campuses.

This is a battle we can all fight together. Thank you for all your prayers and encouragement.







# Church News

Notes of Congregational Activities in North America

## Allegheny Conference

The **Air Hill** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa., had a night of music May 23 with the Wingert Family Singers. ♦ "Seeds, Shoots, Blossoms, and Fruit" was the theme of the May 20 MOMS meeting at the **Antrim** church, Chambersburg. ♦ The **Chambersburg** church had VBS July 19-23 on the theme "Son Castle Faire: Using Our Talents to Serve the King." ♦ Christian Retreat Center was the site of the June 4-6 father-son camp-out of the **Fairview Ave.** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa. ♦ The choir and orchestra of the **Five Forks** church, Waynesboro, presented "God For Us" May 15-16. VBS was Aug. 9-13, "Son Castle Faire." ♦ The junior department of the **Hollowell** church, Waynesboro, presented "Everyone Calls Him Sir" June 6. Chalk artist Don Myers inspired the congregation on June 13. ♦ The **Iron Springs** church, Fairfield, Pa., had a carry-in meal and hymn sing June 6. ♦ On May 21 the college and career class of the **Martinsburg**, Pa., church had a candlelight dinner that raised funds for mortgage reduction. ♦ Mr. and Mrs. Warren Hoffman led a couples' seminar recently for the **South**

**Mountain** congregation, Shippensburg, Pa. ♦ Bishop Hock preached on May 16 at the **Mt. Tabor** church, Mercersburg, Pa. The Sunday school picnic was July 10.

## Atlantic Conference

Chris Peterson is now director of Circle Venture for the **Circle of Hope** church, Philadelphia, Pa. ♦ The youth of the **Conoy** church, Elizabethtown, Pa., traveled to Navajo Mission June 26-July 3 to lead a children's club and do community outreach. ♦ On June 13 Don Shafer spoke on "Gifts Open Us to Grace" at the **Cross Roads** church, Mount Joy, Pa. J.D. Martin was MPF speaker on June 2. ♦ The Jr. Choir of the **Elizabethtown** congregation gave the musical "Rescue in the Night" on May 8, the story of Daniel in the lions' den. The senior appreciation dinner was June 4. ♦ On June 13, the **Fairland** congregation, Cleona, Pa., hosted The Steven Courtney Show, a night of high-energy ministry. ♦ Mr. and Mrs. Larry Byrnes spoke June 9 about OMS mission society to the **Free Grace** congregation, Millersburg, Pa. The church roof was replaced recently.

The youth of the **Lancaster**, Pa., church went to Creation '99 June 23-27, and on an MDS trip to Wichita, Kan., July 3-10. ♦ The grades 4-6 children of the **Manor** congregation, Mountville, Pa., gave the musical "And That's the Truth" May 2. Glenn Ginder was installed as associate pas-

tor of administration May 16. ♦ Thirteen people were baptized this spring at the **Manheim**, Pa., church. The theme of the July 25-29 VBS was putting on the full armor of God. ♦ The **Millersville**, Pa., church youth had a witnessing/shopping trip to King of Prussia Mall May 29. VBS, July 11-15, was "The Great Bible Land Dig." ♦ The **Mt. Pleasant** church, Mount Joy, Pa., had a pig roast and youth servant auction on May 15. ♦ The **New Hope** church, Harrisburg, Pa., hosted VBS June 27-July 2 on "Treasure Hunt Bible Adventure."

Cathy Parsons was in concert at all three Sunday services recently at the **New Joy** church, Akron, Pa. ♦ On June 20, Diane Hermann shared with the **Palmyra**, Pa., congregation about the Namaan dependency treatment center. ♦ Pastor Shaw gave the meditation during the "worship at the park" service of the **Pequea** church, Lancaster, Pa., on May 23. Music was by Soul Patrol. The men's fellowship planned a trip to a Phillies-Blue Jays game June 11. ♦ Six persons were baptized May 16 at the **Refton**, Pa., church. A luncheon for new members was May 23. ♦ The 4th-Sunday concert of prayer at the **Silverdale**, Pa., church was June 27. The youth went camping July 23-25. ♦ Esther Spurrier spoke about missions on May 23 to the **Speedwell Heights** congregation, Lititz, Pa.

## Canadian Conference

The women of the **Bertie** church, Stevensville, Ont., recently sent baby supplies to Mexico. ♦ Two mothers have made Christian commitments as a result of the playgroup at the **Boyle** church, St. Ann's, Ont. The church women planned a fashion show for June 25. ♦ On May 13 the women of the **Bridlewood** church, Agincourt, Ont., gathered to hear the music of The Joyful Noise and testimony by Dolores Prussak. ♦ On May 2 at the **Cheapside** church, Nanticoke, Ont., representatives of Mission Aviation Fellowship, Men for Missions, and

Generation Now urged ordinary persons to go to mission fields. ♦ Jack and Trudy McClane brought a message May 16 to the **Clearview** congregation, Kindersley, Sask. On June 6 and 13, Dr. Sam Goldstein helped the congregation understand childhood depression. ♦ The **Falls View** church, Niagara Falls, Ont., hosted a garage sale June 12. A church mini-golf outing was planned for June 19.

Bishop Winger visited the **Heise Hill** church, Gormley, Ont., on May 30 for the service and carry-in meal. ♦ On May 22 the **Houghton** church, Langton, Ont., had a yard/bake sale with proceeds helping the mission team, headed for Reynosa, Mexico, July 4-12. Other fund raisers were two barbecues, a bike-a-thon, and car wash. ♦ The **Massey Place** church, Saskatoon, Sask., had a family picnic and baseball game on June 27. ♦ The **New Life** church, Collingwood, Ont., hosted the drama "Heaven's Gates and Hell's Flames" June 13-16. ♦ Bishop Winger spoke on the evening of May 30 to the **Oak Ridges**, Ont., congregation. Leroy and Judy Eberly visited on June 6. ♦ The youth of the **Port Colborne**, Ont., church hosted a spaghetti dinner and auction on May 29. On June 13 the church celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Sunbeam Sunday school, the precursor of the church.

A donation for the KW Pregnancy Centre was part of the May 13 mother-daughter banquet of the **Rosebank** women, Petersburg, Ont. ♦ "Good Kings Come in Small Packages" was presented May 30 at the **Sherkston**, Ont., church by the Children of the Lord. June 6 was anniversary-homecoming Sunday with a barbecue after the service. ♦ John Sider was the guest in the May 30 evening service of the **Stayner**, Ont., church, with sundaes afterward. "Son Castle Faire" was the July 5-9 VBS theme. ♦ Renee Sider joined the staff of the **Wainfleet**, Ont., church June 1 as interim youth director. ♦ The **Westheights** church, Kitchener, Ont., joined on May 2 with the **Crossroads** (Guelph, Ont.) and **Rosebank** congregations in a walk to promote Camp Kahquah and raise money for Cooperative Ministries.

## Central Conference

The **Amherst** church, Massillon, Ohio, had a barn sale June 11-12. Summer family night cookouts and activities were June 9, July 14, and Aug. 11. ♦ The **Beulah Chapel** church, Springfield, Ohio, had a farewell dinner May 30 for the Brubaker family. ♦ Charlie and Leone Byer spoke on missions May 2 to the **Christian Union** congregation, Garrett, Ind. ♦ Bishop Byers led a conflict

## George Green installed at Susquehanna Valley

Rev. George Green and his wife Fran were installed as the pastoral couple of the **Susquehanna Valley** Church in Selinsgrove, Pa., on Sunday, May 2, during the morning worship service. Bishop Ray Hock preached and conducted the installation service. A carry-in dinner was held a week later to welcome the pastoral family.

Pastor and Mrs. Green are

originally from Huntingdon, Pa. Both graduated from the Nazarene Bible College in Colorado Springs, Colo., and have pastored in the Church of the Nazarene and Brethren in Christ churches in Kentucky, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. They have three grown children and three grandchildren all living in Duncannon, Pa.

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management seminar May 14 for the **Highland** church, West Milton, Ohio. An outdoor baptismal service was planned for June 27. ♦ The men's annual golf outing of the **Lakeview** church, Goodrich, Mich., was planned for June 19. A trip to see a game at Tiger Stadium was July 23. ♦ The **Morrison**, Ill., church is planning to launch TLC groups in September. ♦ The **Pleasant Hill**, Ohio, church hosted regional quiz finals June 5. A farewell dinner for the Kershners was May 23. Henry Miller began as interim pastor soon after. ♦ Levi Hershberger was guest speaker for the **Sippo Valley** church, Massillon, on May 16. ♦ The **Union Grove** congregation, New Paris, Ind., held a ground-breaking for a new parsonage on Mar. 27.

### Midwest Conference

The **Bethany** church, Thomas, Okla., welcomed nine new members on May 9. A new program for children, "Sunday Night Live," began on May 16.

### Pacific Conference

The **Pacific Highway** congregation, Salem, Ore., received an offering for Life Line Ministries on Mother's Day. ♦ "Son Castle Faire" was the theme of the June 21-25 VBS at the **Upland**, Calif., church. ♦ The **Walnut**, Calif., congregation delivered 20 kits to MCC for Kosovar refugees, and collected eyeglasses June 27 for Medical Missions International.

### Southeast Conference

Several small groups of the **Highland Park** congregation, Dublin, Va., recently studied *Healing for Damaged Emotions*. George and Rachel Kibler led a missions emphasis on May 23.

### Susquehanna Conference

The **Big Valley** church, Belleville, Pa., hosted a father-son banquet June 25. The youth had a yard sale June 2 and 9. ♦ The **Carlisle**, Pa., church had a three-hour membership class June

13. The young adults held their annual retreat July 30-Aug. 1. ♦ The **Cedar Grove** congregation, Mifflintown, Pa., voted 87 percent in favor of planting a daughter church in the spring. ♦ The **Dillsburg**, Pa., church had an all-music and hymns night May 16. ♦ On May 2 the Chancel Choir and Grantham Brass of the **Grantham**, Pa., church presented "Songs From the Heart." ♦ Wesley Miller was master chef for the May 8 mother-daughter banquet of the **Green Grove** church, Spring Mills, Pa.

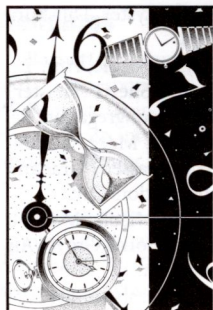
Pastor Hepner of the **Mechanicsburg**, Pa., church led a trip to Zimbabwe for renewal services and medical mission on Aug. 1-16. A teacher appreciation luncheon for the church was June 13. ♦ The Messiah Village Singing Men were in concert at the **Messiah Village** church, Mechanicsburg, on June 13. The Southernaires sang on June 30. ♦ John and Susie Stanley from Messiah College explored the topic of women in leadership on May 6 for the **Redland Valley** church, York Haven, Pa. An all-church chicken barbecue was planned for June 19. ♦ Richard Ross led a seminar on May 15 for the **Wesley** church, Mt. Holly Springs, Pa., on marriage, divorce, celibacy, and remarriage. ♦ On May 30 the **West Shore** congregation, Mechanicsburg, had a farewell and bridal shower for youth director Jeremy Tyrrell and April Cornel, leaving for service in Canada.

## For The Record

### Births

**Barley:** Benjamin Andrew, Apr. 17; Phillip and Sharon (Riley) Barley, Manor congregation, Pa.

**Bigler:** Andre Shamar, May 10; Hollie Bigler, New Guilford congregation, Pa.



## E.V. TimeLines

Selected from the archives of the EVANGELICAL VISITOR

### 100 Years Ago

July 1, 1899—Samuel Zook editorialized: "We have heard the expression that the justified life is a miserable life. We fear such know nothing

of the real justification by faith. It is enjoying peace with God. It is rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God. It is without condemnation. It is the conscious knowledge of being right with God. It is the foundation of all subsequent experiences."

### 75 Years Ago

July 21, 1924—Associate editor E.H. Hess, in an editorial titled "Was the 1924 General Conference worth while?": "As delegates... have we... come to an intelligent understanding of each question under consideration by asking for fuller information if need be, by speaking on the question in calmness, fairness and sincerity...? Are we ready to urge and see to the execution of each ruling, or will we use the damp cloth or muzzle on the rulings that don't suit our fancy and practice?... May we ask whether the placement, replacement or displacement [of nominees] was always actuated by the most efficient service to the church as a whole; has the express reasons for displacements been without guile; have the plausible reasons given been the real reasons?"

### 50 Years Ago

Aug. 22, 1949—Evelyn Poe reported on Martin Niemoller's addressing an International Work Camp in Frankfort she attended: "'Thou shalt kill—anyone not useful to the state,' was one of the new commandments Hitler gave.... On this point the German churches were challenged.... [The next Sunday] Dr. Niemoller... stepped to the altar and said: 'Thou shalt not kill.' Thus he was taken as being against the state."

### 25 Years Ago

July 25, 1974—A series of questions and answers highlighted aspects of the "Visitor Lifetime Subscription" plan introduced at the 1974 General Conference.

### 10 Years Ago

August 1989—A series of articles focused on the Scripture and Bible reading. In the lead article, Luke Keefer Jr. noted that "the centrality of Christ draws the Brethren in Christ primary focus to the Gospels, where the story about Jesus is told in its greatest detail.... The tug of the Gospels upon us does not mean that we take doctrine lightly; rather, we feel constrained to follow the teaching and example of Jesus.... 'Obedience' is a word emphasized by us in a way that is different from those for whom the key word is 'believe.'"

## Schedule of Events

Board meetings are held at Grantham, Pa., unless otherwise noted. For more information, contact the denominational office, P.O. Box 290, Grantham, Pa. 17027; phone (717) 697-2634.

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Oct. 2     | Niagara Christian Collegiate Heritage Day - Fort Erie, Ont.                                  |
| Oct. 2     | Brethren in Christ Historical Society Annual Meeting - Bertie BIC Church, Stevensville, Ont. |
| Oct. 15-16 | Conference on the Brethren in Christ and Worship - Center for Brethren in Christ Studies     |
| Oct. 24-26 | Leadership Council Retreat   |
| Oct. 26-28 | Leadership Council   |
| Oct. 28-30 | New Pastors Orientation  |



**Bollinger:** Kayla Lou, Feb. 25; Randy and Becky Bollinger, New Joy congregation, Pa.

**Brandt:** Samuel Jacob, Apr. 24; Steve and Jody Brandt, Dillsburg congregation, Pa.

**Cage:** Kellie Elizabeth, Apr. 30; Josh and Kristin Cage, Dillsburg congregation, Pa.

**Crawford:** Joseph Matthew, Mar. 25; Peter and Deanna Crawford, Christian Union congregation, Ind.

**Donat:** Austin Jerry, May 11; David and Susan Donat, Cross Roads congregation, Pa.

**Ebeling:** Joshua William, Apr. 26; Joseph and Jean (Creamer) Ebeling, Manor congregation, Pa.

**Erisman:** Emmalyn Joy, Mar. 5; David and Carrie (Bierer) Erisman, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

**Eyster:** Mikayla Rose, Apr. 21;

Shawn and Shelly Eyster, Dillsburg congregation, Pa.

**Gentile:** Alyssa Nicole, Apr. 28, 1998; Vincent and Sherri (Heister) Gentile, Souderton congregation, Pa.

**Graham:** Olivia Mae, Apr. 24; Mike and Tracy (Klassen) Graham, Houghton congregation, Ont.

**Grove:** Ashton Nicole, May 14; Kevin and Stacie (Horn) Grove, Air Hill congregation, Pa.

**Hess:** Reagan Elizabeth, Feb. 25; Duane and Bridget (Herry) Hess, Manheim congregation, Pa.

**Horst:** Natasha Ann, Apr. 16; Todd and Becky (Bricker) Horst, Mt. Taber congregation, Pa.

**Jackson:** Gilbert Andrew Elijah, Apr. 12; Larry and Lynne Jackson, Port Colborne congregation, Ont.

**Jones:** Philip Martin Arthur, Apr. 19; Brian and Elizabeth (Thompson)

Jones, Manor congregation, Pa.

**Kauffman:** Haley Renee, Apr. 24; Ray and Brenda Kauffman, New Guilford congregation, Pa.

**Kibbe:** Jocelyn Nicole, May 18; Jason and Melissa (Wright) Kibbe, Air Hill congregation, Pa.

**King:** Ryan James, Feb. 23; Donald and Lori (Boris) King, Speedwell Heights congregation, Pa.

**Koons:** Joshua Allan, Apr. 27; Sam and Tanja (Axen) Koons, Fairview Ave. congregation, Pa.

**Lantz:** Adrian David, Apr. 25; David and Tommi (Lynch) Lantz, Wesley congregation, Pa.

**Likes:** Daelinn Kole Edward, Apr. 1; Jeremy and Amber (Hatton) Likes, Christian Union congregation, Ind.

**Lindsey:** Emily Elizabeth, Apr. 20; Dan and Tiffany (Crawford) Lindsey, Lancaster congregation, Pa.

**Long:** Travis Banks, Apr. 6; Stephen and Cindy Long, Cedar Grove congregation, Pa.

**McCleaf:** Derrick Matthew, Apr. 7; Samuel and Jodi (Clendening) McCleaf, South Mountain Chapel congregation, Pa.

**Meyers:** Tristan Aaron, Apr. 15; Darwin and August (Kuhn) Meyers, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

**Myers:** Abigail Arline, Feb. 1; Todd and Amanda (Fosbre) Myers, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

**Paden:** Trent Aaron, Mar. 26; Rick and Missy (Bossert) Paden, Cedar Grove congregation, Pa.

**Powell:** Noah Wesley, Apr. 5; Wade and Cherie (Gruver) Powell, South Mountain Chapel congregation, Pa.

**Roberts:** Madison Sierra, Apr. 10;

## MONEY MATTERS

# The power of money

by Philip D. Keefer

The quotes from *A Christian View of Money* by Mark Vincent are used by permission. Mark Vincent is the director of *The Giving Project*. For more information about *The Giving Project* contact Phil Keefer, Director of Stewardship.

*Money is god-like for at least seven reasons. Small 'g,' but god-like nevertheless.*

1. *It outlives you. Money was here before you, and it will be here after you pass away.*

2. *Its circle of influence is greater. Money goes places you can't go and touches people you cannot reach.*

3. *Money is mysterious. Its properties, impact and behavior cannot fully be described by anyone—even Alan Greenspan, head of the Federal Reserve Board of the United States.*

*Mr. Greenspan always hedges his bets, 'The economy could do this. Then again, it could do that,' he says. No economist claims complete knowledge.*

4. *Money lives among the things we are tempted to worship. If money lives longer, has greater power, and is shrouded in mystery, it begins to sound like a god.*

5. *Money mimics everything promised in the New Jerusalem. The Christian's eternal reward includes no crying, plentiful feasts and beautiful homes. With money we purchase a virtually real imitation. It might not be a wedding feast of the Lamb, but for seven bucks you eat all you want at Ponderosa. Maybe not a heavenly mansion, but, you can buy a home in a gated community.*

6. *It is an instrument you wield. The verb 'wield' describes the action of a sword and a scalpel. A sword is a tool of destruction, a scalpel is an agent of healing. Money can do either, and sometimes both at the same time.*

7. *Everything can be economized. Does my*

*church want to establish another congregation or send a missionary? There is an economic cost. Do I want a graduate degree? Money again. Do I hope to treat my wife to a wedding anniversary holiday? It's not free.... Money. Money. Money. Every noble intention has economic implications.*

(From *A Christian View of Money*, by Mark Vincent)

Because money is god-like, Christians need to be concerned whether or not money controls their lives. Our relationship with God requires our undivided devotion. Money dare not come between us and him. "...Samuel said to the whole house of Israel, 'If you are returning to the Lord with all your hearts, then rid yourselves of the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths and commit yourselves to the Lord and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines'" (1 Samuel 7:3).

There is not any place in God's plan for divided loyalties. Our God is a jealous God. "You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God..." (Exodus 20:5). "Do not worship any other God, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God" (Exodus 34:14). "Are we trying to arouse the Lord's jealousy? Are we stronger than he?" (1 Corinthians 10:22).

**When is money god-like?** Money is god-like when we depend on it for things money cannot buy. Money cannot buy happiness. It can make us happy for awhile, but when the



Danielle Krager, Silverdale congregation, Pa.

**Ruff:** Joseph Daniel, Mar. 21; Stephen and Darene (McGee) Ruff, Zion congregation, Kan.

**Schultz:** Nicholas Henry, May 23; Gregory and Laurie (Barley) Schultz, Manor congregation, Pa.

**Showalter:** Garrett Leon, Apr. 22; H. Leo and Michelle (Kanagy) Showalter, Five Forks congregation, Pa.

**Smeltz:** Emily Elizabeth, Feb. 15; Steven and Diane (Bingaman) Smeltz, Susquehanna Valley congregation, Pa.

**Snader:** Madelyne Breann, May 10; Steve and Jodie (Denlinger) Snader, Cross Roads congregation, Pa.

**Snyder:** Brett Austin, May 20; Randy and Stephanie (Keener) Snyder, Cross Roads congregation, Pa.

**Stebbins:** Mirissa Hope, Apr. 30;

Marc and Sherri Stebbins, Bethel congregation, Merrill, Mich.

**Thompson:** John David, Apr. 23; David and Sheri (Garis) Thompson, Souderton congregation, Pa.

**Zimmerman:** Hannah Jo, Jan. 15; Randy and Leigh Zimmerman, New Joy congregation, Pa.

## Corrections

*We received incorrect information on two births reported in the last issue. The correct information:*

**Ferguson:** Derrek Douglas, Apr. 18; Doug and Marcie (Rohrer) Ferguson, Zion congregation, Kan.

**Heisey:** Eli David, Mar. 5; Stanley and Dawn (Geib) Heisey, Silverdale congregation, Pa.

*We ask correspondents to double-check names and dates, please.*

## Weddings

**Barnett-Spessard:** Claire E. Spessard, Waynesboro, Pa., and Richard W. Bennett, Quincy, Pa., May 15, at Five Forks Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Wilbur F. Besecker officiating.

**Bivighouse-Hamm:** Stacy Hamm, daughter of Cindy and Paul Whitehouse, Telford, Pa., and Travis Bivighouse, Mar. 27, at Silverdale Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Frederick L. Geib officiating.

**Cargas-Bewley:** Allison Eileen, daughter of Jesse and Margaret Bewley, Estero, Fla., and Nickolaus Peter, son of Nancy and the late Angelo Cargas, Grantville, Pa., May 8, at Skyline View Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John G. Reitz officiating.

**Dubbs-Dayley:** Katrina Renee,

daughter of John and Sharon Dayley, Mercersburg, Pa., and William J., son of Mr. and Mrs. C. Larry Dubbs, Shippensburg, Pa., Mar. 20, at Mt. Tabor Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Roy E. Brake Sr. officiating.

**Edwards-Mellinger:** Diane F., daughter of John and Rhoda Mellinger, Mountville, Pa., and Gerald S. Jr., son of Betty and the late Gerald S. Edwards, May 8, at Manor Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John Hawbaker officiating.

**Fahnestock-Riser:** Nancy Riser, McSherrystown, Pa., and Roger Fahnestock, York Spring, Pa., May 15, at Sacred Heart Basilica with Msgr. George Rost officiating.

**Hess-Garman:** Amy Beth, daughter of Mervin and Linda Garman, East Petersburg, Pa., and Rodney Lynn, son of Ray and Faye Hess, Pequea,

high wears off, we are right back where we started.

Money is god-like when we say, "I'll begin to tithe when I can afford it." The person who waits for the "opportune moment" will likely never begin to tithe. People, appropriately, begin to tithe when their giving is a love response to God's unmerited grace in their lives.

Money is god-like when we satisfy our wants at the expense of meeting the needs in another's life. Bypassing the needs of our "neighbors" is paramount to bypassing the needs of Jesus.

Money is god-like when it's easier to buy a new car than it is to make a pledge to my church's building project. Money is god-like when it's easier to buy new clothes than it is to tithe to my church. Money is god-like when it's easier to buy a second, third or fourth TV rather than increase my giving beyond the tithe. Money is god-like when I place a higher priority on material resources than I do on giving to the church.

Money is god-like when my dream for making a fortune replaces my devotion to God. Money is god-like when I believe it will fix what I think is wrong. Money is god-like when climbing the success ladder is more important to me than my service to my local church.

We have this god-like thing in our hands. Money can dominate and twist the

human spirit if not held in check by a more powerful master.

Jesus said, "No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the

other. You cannot serve both God and money" (Luke 16:13). "Jesus said to him, 'Away from me, Satan! For it is written: "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only"' (Matthew 4:10).

## COOPERATIVE MINISTRIES REPORT

	U.S. \$		Canadian \$	
	1999	1998	1999	1998
1 Total Ministry Budget	4,268,291.00	4,310,271.00		
2 Less Other Budget Receipts	475,025.00	541,360.00		
3 Cooperative Ministries Budget	3,793,266.00	3,768,911.00	465,000.00*	452,000.00*
4 January 1 - June 30, 1999				
5 CM Shared Giving				
6 Congregational	1,061,875.89	1,026,800.00	193,891.00	173,514.00
7 Individual	60,892.60	34,382.00		
8 Total CM Shared Giving	1,122,768.49	1,061,182.00	193,891.00	173,514.00
9 CM Designated Giving				
10 Congregational	134,866.07	211,064.00	17,701.00	26,228.00
11 Individual	135,911.27	119,098.00	4,001.00	
12 Total CM Designated Giving	270,777.34	330,162.00		
13 Total Cooperative Ministries Giving	1,393,545.83	1,391,344.00	193,891.00	173,514.00
14 Total Other Budget Receipts	215,904.37	119,535.66		
15 Total CM Giving & Other Budget Receipts	1,609,450.20	1,510,879.66		
16 Total Expenses	2,145,447.54	1,975,599.57		
17 Deficit	(535,997.34)	(464,719.91)		

NOTE: \*Canadian Conference total budget does not include designated or direct giving.

It is important that you have a complete picture of Cooperative Ministries funding and expenses. Therefore we are providing you with as much information as possible.

LINE 1 is the comprehensive budgets for general church ministries such as: General Leadership, Regional Leadership, Brotherhood Concerns, Congregational Life, Evangelism and Church Planting, Stewardship Services, Ministry and Doctrine and World Missions. It also includes the approved Cooperative Ministries amount for each Regional Conference, Messiah College and the Vision Fund.

LINE 2 represents interest income, regional conference contributions, payments from other organizations for shared services, and some fees for services, etc.

LINE 3 is the approved Cooperative Ministries budget.

LINE 5-13 is what was traditionally reported through the *Evangelical Visitor*.

LINE 9-12 were formerly reported as designated and direct giving. All designated and direct giving attributable to the Cooperative Ministries budget is now being reported as designated.

LINE 14 is the amount received to date relative to line 2.

LINE 15 is the total of lines 13 and 14.

LINE 16 is the total expenses to date relative to the Total Ministry Budget, line 1.



## 1999 Camp Freedom Report

With the theme of "Practical Holiness," Camp Freedom held its annual camp meeting, Jan. 27-Feb. 7, 1999.

Our co-evangelists were H. Frank Kipe and Wingrove Taylor. Paul Pierpoint and Paul Martin served as our special week-end speakers. This camp was characterized by various sermon series. Rev. Kipe's messages focused on the seven churches of Revelation. Dr. Taylor preached a series on sanctification for the church today. He also had a short series on the life of Joseph. Rev. Martin conducted a series on the life and leadership of Nehemiah.

The Jerald Glick family served as our song evangelists. Additional music was provided by the Hobe Sound Bible choir and a Penn View quartet.

Mission's day proved to be a blessing for the

camp. Charles and Leone Byer represented the work of the Navajo Mission. Fred Holland gave a short summary of what exciting things are happening around the globe with Brethren in Christ Missions. George Shaffer represented the Ft. Myers Rescue Mission, which works with drug addicts and homeless people.

Youth services were under the direction of Randy Tolley, while our children's worker was Clara Ritchey.

Those who attended camp reported that it was good for them to be there. If you failed to attend camp this year, or you've never attended Camp Freedom, let me take this opportunity to invite you to next year's camp. The dates are Jan. 26-Feb. 6, 2000. Our evangelists will be Henry Landis and B. J. Walker. Do plan to come and participate in Camp Freedom.

—Submitted by Jesse Bawel, Sec.

Pa., May 1, at Grantham Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Mary Jane Davis and Rev. Rick Mailloux officiating.

**Housser-Winger:** Lisa Pauline, daughter of Ray and Evelyn Winger, Wroxeter, Ont., and Stephen Joseph, son of Lavern and Yvonne Housser, Wroxeter, Apr. 3, at Fordwich Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Wayne Topping officiating.

**Klink-Monn:** Rachel Monn, Chambersburg, Pa., and Brian Klink, Chambersburg, May 15, at Camp Penn with Rev. William A. Shank officiating.

**Wadel-Longacre:** Lisa Denise, daughter of David and Ruth Ann Longacre, Dry Run, Pa., and Chad Alan, son of Ray and Wilma Wadel, Chambersburg, Pa., May 8, at Air Hill Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Marlin Neil officiating.

**Wengert-Chaklos:** Rebetta Chaklos, Chambersburg, Pa., and Samuel Wengert, Shippensburg, Pa., May 15, at Air Hill Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Gerald Wengert officiating.

**Woodland-Colyn:** Jill, Tintern, Ont., daughter of John and Mary Colyn, and James, son of Keith and Judy Woodland, Wainfleet, Ont., June 5, at Tintern Church of Christ.

**Woodland-Tempest:** Amy, Fonthill, Ont., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Tempest, and Scott, son of Keith and Judy Woodland, Wainfleet, Ont., May 22, at Brockview Bible Chapel.

## Obituaries

**Burton:** Jewell Burton, born Oct. 4, 1925, in Columbia, Ky., daughter of Joe and Evie Bryant McQueary, died Feb. 26. Preceding her in death were her husband, Finis E. Burton; a son, Finis Jr.; and a daughter, Ruby Roberts. Surviving are 4 sons, Joseph,

Coy, Don, and Kenneth; 10 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; and 4 siblings, Coy and Dennis McQueary, Mable Vincent, and Lettie Dargle. Jewell attended the Millerfield church, Ky., and was a homemaker. The funeral was at Stotts-Phelps-McQueary Funeral Home with Rev. J. Richard Lehman and Rev. Darrell Karnes officiating. Interment was in Bearwallow Cemetery.

**Engle:** Eloise Engle, born Nov. 16, 1928, in Upland, Calif., daughter of Paul and Elsie Engle, died Apr. 26. Surviving are her husband, Ralph Engle; 2 daughters, Kimberly Ray and Jennifer Cunningham; a stepson, Dean Engle; and a grandson. Eloise was a registered nurse and lifelong member of the Upland congregation, Calif. The funeral was at the church with Rev. Robert Hempy and Rev. Mike Luchtenburg officiating. Interment was in Bellevue Mausoleum.

**Ensminger:** John E. Ensminger Sr., born May 23, 1919, in Palmyra, Pa., son of Daniel S. and Nora Hostetter Ensminger, died Apr. 26. A brother, Henry, preceded him in death. Surviving are his wife, Esther (Crouse Lentz); 3 sons, Ronald N., John E., and James E.; 2 daughters, Barbara Carmichael and Susan Deiling; and two stepsons, Ronald and Roger Lentz. John was owner of Ensminger-Strock Insurance Agency. He was a World War II veteran, member of the Annville-Cleona Lions Club and Annville American Legion, and an airplane pilot. He was a member of the Fairland congregation, Pa. The funeral was at the Lebanon Valley Brethren Home chapel with Rev. Ronald Slabaugh and Rev. John Harpold officiating. Interment was in Grand View Memorial Park.

**Ensminger:** Samuel F. Ensminger, born Dec. 14, 1905, in Palmyra, Pa.,

died Apr. 27. Surviving are his wife, Lucy E. (Gibbney); and a son, Jessie. Samuel had been a nurseryman, and was a member of the Fairview Ave. congregation, Pa. The funeral was at Lochstampfer Funeral Home with Rev. Ray Kipe officiating. Interment was in Highland Cemetery (Ohio).

**Fohringer:** Marian Elizabeth Fohringer, born Dec. 8, 1921, in Mill Hall, Pa., daughter of Henry S. and Sara Niesley Miller, died Apr. 24. Her husband, Ray D. Fohringer, preceded her in death. Surviving are 2 sons, Ray Jr. and Gary; a brother, Henry; 3 grandchildren; 4 great-grandchildren; and 2 sisters, Anna V. Miller and Esther Gregg. She was a retired food service employee at Messiah College, and member of the Messiah Village Auxiliary. She was a member of the Messiah Village and Grantham churches where she had been active as a teacher and musician. The funeral was held at Messiah Village with Rev. Richard L. Long officiating. Interment was in Cedar Hill Cemetery.

**Gehman:** Lawrence L. Gehman, born Feb. 12, 1921, son of Jacob F. and Emma N. Gehman, died Mar. 28. Four brothers and a sister preceded him in death. Surviving are his wife, Ethel (Landes); 2 sisters, Kathryn Gehman and Sara Derstine; and 2 brothers, Dennis and Clifford. He was a truck driver for the former Farm Bureau of Souderton. He attended the Perkiomen Valley congregation, Pa., where the service was held with Rev. David Croxford and Rev. Fred Geib officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery.

**Good:** Ralph B. Good, born Mar. 19, 1901, son of Joseph and Ella Brandt Good, died Feb. 28. Preceding him in death was his wife, Grace (Wenger). Surviving are his wife, Ruth (Neff); a stepdaughter, Arlene

Adair; 5 grandchildren; 10 stepgreat-grandchildren; a stepgreat-great-grandson; and a sister, Sue B. Eyer. Ralph was a custodian for many years at Upland College, and worked on farms in Pennsylvania, Florida, and New York. He was a member of the Manheim congregation, Pa., where the funeral was officiated by Rev. Greg Funk and Rev. Harlan Nolt. Interment was in the Crossroads church cemetery.

**Hykes:** Lydia R. Hykes, born July 19, 1905, daughter of Jacob D. and Barbara E. Wolf Egolf, died May 20. Her husband, Jacob H. Hykes, and 5 siblings preceded her in death. Surviving are 3 daughters, Jane M. Christophel, Ivy M. Maynard, and Linda G. Rotz; 2 sons, Leslie A. and Jacob O., 19 grandchildren; 14 step-grandchildren; 33 great-grandchildren; a sister, Ruth Hornbaker; and 3 brothers, Ralph, George, and John Egolf. Lydia was a member of the Hollowell congregation, Pa., and a member of the Kingdom Builders Sunday school class. She taught Sunday school for many years. The funeral was at the church with Rev. James M. Sollenberger officiating. Interment was in the Montgomery church cemetery.

**Keefer:** Carol Ann Keefer, born Jan. 9, 1954, died Apr. 30. Surviving are her husband, Douglas S. Keefer; a daughter, Robin D. Keefer; a grandson; a sister, Robin Griffith; and a stepbrother, Clinton Hammond. She was a member of the Dillsburg congregation, Pa., where the funeral was held with Revs. James Spurrier, Phil Keefer, Dan Keefer, and Jared Keefer officiating. Interment was in Grantham Memorial Park.

**Vital:** Anthony N. Vital, born Apr. 20, 1909, son of Harry and Carmella Ninfo Vital, died Apr. 28. His spouse, Sarah Maude, preceded him in death. Surviving are 4 sons, Anthony, James, Daniel, and David; 3 daughters, Dorothy Ott, Marian Hess, and Gertrude Scott; 22 grandchildren; numerous great-grandchildren; and 5 siblings. He had resided at Messiah Village since June 1990, and was a barber and electronic repairman. He was a member of the Messiah Village church. A graveside service was held.

**Williams:** Ronald Perry Williams, born Oct. 31, 1949, in Baltimore, Md., son of Mildred Cassell and Woodrow Wade Williams, died Apr. 9. Preceding him in death were his parents and a brother, Kevin. He was a U.S. Air Force veteran, and dispatcher for Keen Transport of Carlisle where he was 1998 Employee of the Year. He was a member of the Mechanicsburg church, Pa. Rev. Ken Hepner and Rev. Doris Barr officiated at the service. Interment was in Grantham Memorial Park.



# Southern California MCC Festival and Sale raises \$81,500

by Frances Harmon

Proceeds from the second annual Southern California MCC Festival and Sale for World Hunger and Relief exceeded \$81,500. This sale, held May 21-22 at Pacific Christian Center (campus of former Upland College) in Upland, Calif., produced an increase of \$7,500 over the previous year.

Stan Long, chairman, proclaimed it an "unforgettable experience of fellowship and cooperation where Brethren in Christ and Mennonite families worked together in the process of meeting human needs in the name of Christ." Proceeds are sent to the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) to support their international relief and development programs.

More than 200 volunteers from local churches worked together to create this successful event. An auction of handmade quilts and related items such as comforters, afghans, and wall hangings resulted in a total sale of \$32,095. A hand-pieced appliquéd quilt made by a group of ladies in Missouri brought the highest bid of \$3,000. Many quilts came from Pennsylvania while others were produced locally. A quilt made



in Russia was a special feature, bringing a bid of \$900. Dr. Virginia Kauffman, retired missionary from Africa, donated sixteen handmade afghans. Lula Couch (pictured above), former missionary, donated an appliquéd quilt she made by hand in her retirement center room. "We are grateful for the people who do a labor of love for

this cause all year long," stated Jean Byer, quilt chairman.

Special objects of art added interest and delight. A sculpture of St. Francis of Assisi by sculptor A. Margaret Hudson was auctioned off for \$1,250. Six prints donated by the popular American artist P. Buckley Moss were sold, two of these prints bringing bids of \$600 each.

A 5K Run for Relief, a country store and farmer's market, a silent auction, a special Kid's World, and food booths featuring international and American foods all contributed to the festive atmosphere of good fellowship and fun.

The third annual Southern California MCC Festival and Sale will be held on May 19-20, 2000, at the Pacific Christian Center, Upland. For information and to be placed on the mailing list, call (909) 982-9646 or write to: Southern California Festival and Sale, P. O. Box 636, Upland, CA 91785.

## Annual Hymn Sing

at

**Historic Ringgold Meeting  
House**

**Ringgold, Maryland**

**Sunday,**

**Aug. 29, 1999**

**5:00-6:00 p.m.**

**in the Meeting House**

Leaders include Jim Stauffer, Marcus Yeatts, and Dwight Thomas. Audience singing will be used on a Ringgold Meeting House website. Refreshments following the service.

For more information, contact Avery Zook, (717) 264-2580, or Franklin Kipe Jr. (301) 824-3689.

*Directions: Take Rt. 997 south from Waynesboro which becomes MD 64. Turn left at the sign to Ringgold. About 1/2 mile, turn left. The church will be seen among the trees.*

## CONFERENCE ON WORSHIP

Sponsored by the Center for Brethren in Christ Studies

**Grantham Brethren in Christ Church**

**OCTOBER 15-16, 1999**

### Presentations

Dennis Hollinger, "The Varieties of Worship: A Historical/Sociological Profile"

Dwight Thomas, "From Living Room to Sanctuary: Reflections on Brethren in Christ Worship"

Craig Sider, "Why Worship"

Terry Brensinger, "A Brethren in Christ Theology of Worship"

### Workshops

Brenda Doyle, "Children in Worship"

David Hershberger, "Worship teams"

Karen Durbin, "Blended Worship"

David Hall, "Planning for Worship"

Rodney White, "Cross-cultural Worship"

Janet Peifer, "Worship for Older People"

Wayne Hasson, "Worship in Small Churches"

Jim Spurrier, "Preaching and Worship"

### Panels

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Approaches to Worship in Four Congregations

### Worship Periods

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## Spiritual watercourses

Niagara Falls is one of my cherished places. Whenever General Conference is in Canada, I make it a point to stop there. Just before the falls, the Niagara river flows deep (20 feet on the Canadian side) and deceptively swift, expressing a quiet, potent, almost ominous, aura. Reaching the falls, this great volume of water roars over the edge and down about 160 feet to the rocks below. In fact, just in case you're into trivia, every minute about 12,000,000 cubic feet, or 379,000 tons, of water surges over the cliffs of the falls of Niagara. A mesmerizing place, Niagara Falls prompts me to think about the majesty and power of God.

Water. Many texts in the Bible use an analogy involving water to describe the power, peace, security, judgment, and blessing of God. These analogies present truth in memorable and picturesque ways. For example, from the Old Testament, Malachi 3:10 describes the blessing of God as the water rushing out of an opened dam. "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my

house. Test me in this,' says the Lord Almighty, 'and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.'"

Psalm 46 contrasts the peace of God's presence, a river whose streams "make glad the city of God," with the tumults of life on earth, waters that "roar and foam." Isaiah describes God's presence as a peaceful flowing river. The restored Zion will be a peaceful abode and "it will be like a place of broad rivers and streams" (Isaiah 33:21). However, earlier in Isaiah, the wayward Israelites who rejected the "gently flowing waters of Shiloh," were to anticipate a God-sent flood (Assyria) that would overwhelm them (Isaiah 8:6-8).

Jesus shouted to the crowds an invitation to come to him and drink. He said that for the one who believes in him, the Holy Spirit would be as a stream of "living water" flowing from within (John 7:37-39). Jesus also told the Samaritan woman as they were standing by Jacob's well that "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:13-14).

The summary statement of our Lord at the end of the book of Revelation is, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life" (Rev. 21:6). An angel showed John a river in his

vision called "the river of the water of life." Crystal clear, it flowed out from the thrones of God the Father and Jesus Christ (Rev. 22:1). A final invitation issues forth from heaven, "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life" (Rev 22:17).

Borrowing from Andrew Murray, *The Believer's Prayer Life*, we can draw some helpful understanding with these analogies. God relates to his people through Christ as an ever-flowing spring of grace, love, and blessedness to his people—a spring that never dries up in the heat of summer. This grace influences us [from Latin "in" (in) + "fluere" (to flow), a neat word] through the Holy Spirit. And this grace flows through us to reach a dry and dusty world where there is no spiritual water. Therefore we, God's people, are to be spiritual watercourses. In this picture, therefore, sin is anything that blocks or dams the flow of the stream.

The more closely the channel is connected to the reservoir, the more unhindered and freely will the water flow through it. The more we involve ourselves in prayer and experience the fullness of Christ's presence and the work of the Holy Spirit, the more we cultivate that fellowship, the more robust will be that flow of grace to us, and the more useful we will be in the kingdom of God.

*Ed Kessler pastors the Free Grace Brethren in Christ Church in Millersburg, Pa.*

## Niagara Christian Collegiate announces Heritage Day

Every fall, thousands of visitors come to the Niagara Christian Collegiate campus in Fort Erie, Ontario, to participate in Heritage Day. Saturday, Oct. 2, marks the 23rd annual Heritage Day. It continues to be a celebration of the past with displays of antique power engines, old cars, quilting, spinning, and for the first time, the "Gramophone Doctor" with his display of vintage gramophones.

Some of the other main attractions include a large craft show (with over 80 quality crafters); a quilt, antique, and miscellaneous auction (at 3:00 p.m.); a large silent auction; and a variety of foods to tempt anyone's palate. Pony rides, children's games, continuous musical entertainment, baked goods, apple butter, Grandma Long's sauerkraut, a pig roast, and more add up to a fun-filled day for the whole family. Heritage Day is also a time to meet friends from long ago—former classmates and teachers, and fellow campers from Camp Kahquah and Niagara Camp.

Plan now to attend on Saturday, Oct. 2, from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00



p.m. Admission is only \$2. Children 12 and under are free. Heritage Day is sponsored by the NCC Auxiliary. Proceeds are used to purchase classroom or dorm equipment and other special projects at the school.





## Onesimus

Readers may correspond with Onesimus by writing to him in care of the *Evangelical Visitor*, P.O. Box 166, Nappanee, IN 46550. Letters to Onesimus may be published unless they are marked "Personal—Not for Publication."

Dear Paul,

I have been reflecting recently on a section in your letter to the Romans. "Accept him whose faith is weak without passing judgment on disputable matters." Well, my learned friend, exactly what is a disputable matter? Is a matter disputable because certain individuals happen to dispute it, or is some higher criteria available? You cast the discussion in the framework of "eating meat" and "drinking wine" and "honoring" or "not honoring" certain days. I understand that these are serious issues for my Hebrew brethren, but they seem rather innocuous compared to some other issues that could be deemed disputable.

For instance, is the right for a brother to own slaves a disputable matter? The Scriptures do seem to offer a mixed message in this regard, but the underlying principle seems rather clear to me: How can one love his brother while possessing him in chains? Is a Christian master loving simply because he does not beat or abuse his "property"?

*There are many hard realities to the Christian life, but none of them is harder than showing love to a brother or sister who disputes something I find personally clear.*

Surely you are not suggesting that "whatever I believe" about this should be kept "between myself and God"?

It is exactly this kind of softness on sin that has resulted in the poor state of the church today. At least that's how I feel about it.

Even so, I am intrigued by the concept of being "fully convinced" in our "own minds." I am not sure I have always been as good at polling my own opinions as I might have been. It is easier for me to see issues through my own experience than to look at the larger picture. Slavery restricts my movements, affects my sense of identity, and limits my ability to express myself, therefore evoking a quick and certain response. How can it be disputable?

Perhaps it is disputable because of the tradition behind it. I am not sure Philemon ever gave it much thought before he met you. Owning slaves was just the thing folks did in his layer of society. If this is true, a disputable matter could be one that carries enough "freight" to blur clear vision. Eating meat, drinking wine, owning slaves, having three wives...all potentially disputable? Hmmm. I'm not sure I like that.

I am torn between the idea of having patience with my weaker brother and preserving the purity of the church. I know that is the argument the Judaizers use in pushing their circumcision agenda, but this is different...because...well...because...because it's my agenda.

It's funny how things kind of just come to me when I am journaling like this. I guess I am not being very loving toward my "weaker brother" if I do not give him the space to reflect honestly before God without incurring my hos-

tility. It really is intolerant of me to expect another person to have the benefit of my experiences, or vice versa. But how do I know that my brother is really "reflecting" on an issue in order to be "fully convinced in his own mind"? Or is that something I should even worry about?

As usual, you are about ten steps ahead of me in your thinking. Who am I to judge another man's servant? Did I leave the splendor of heaven to take on human flesh in order to die on a cross for the sins of the world? What right do I have to say what is in my brother's heart?

I guess some opinions really should be kept between us and God. I am beginning to think that, for me, this is one of them.

There are many hard realities to the Christian life, but none of them is harder than showing love to a brother or sister who disputes something I find personally clear; but that does seem to be the way God has designed things. Who are we to question him?

"Whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves."

Nice addendum, Paul!

Your Reflective Friend,  
Onesimus

### Contributions invited for *Dialogue and Readers Respond*

Persons contributing to *Readers Respond* (letters to the editor) are encouraged to be concise. Letters may be shortened. All letters must be signed. Occasionally we may decide to withhold names due to special circumstances.

Longer contributions are welcomed for *Dialogue*, a forum for readers to express their opinions on a broad range of topics relevant to the mission of the church and to living the Christian life.

*You may send your responses by e-mail to this address: eph@tln.net.*

Each article or letter represents the view of the writer, and does not necessarily reflect the official position or policy of the Brethren in Christ Church or this periodical.



# Focusing our Mission

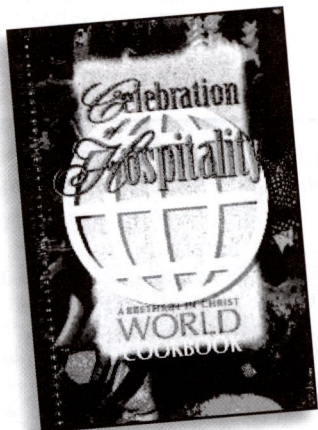
250 Growing, Discipling,  
Sending Congregations  
by A.D. 2000



## The lesson of Littleton

by Darrell S. Winger

A few months ago, few of us realized there was a town called Taber in Alberta or that a High School called Columbine existed in Littleton, Colorado. A few years ago very few of us could locate Kosovo. Now these places are all too familiar to us. We have been overwhelmed by the magnitude of anger, hate, violence, and destruction. The sense of safety, security, and "it can't happen here" is shattered.



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These events show us in new and vivid fashion just what sin and evil produces in the lives of people. We are shown how the human heart, separated from God, concludes how to accomplish things. All this reminds us of the truth of Proverbs 14:12, "there is a way that seems right to man, but in the end it leads to death."

The May 3, 1999 cover page of *Maclean's* (one of Canada's news magazines) reads, "The Lessons of Littleton." The radio talk shows were filled with conversation attempting to come up with solutions and answers. There ultimately is only one answer to Taber, Littleton, and Kosovo, and that is Jesus!

It's against the dark backdrop of current events that the message of Jesus shines even brighter and clearer! As disciples of Jesus, we have the privilege and the responsibility to both tell and show a staggering world that there is a different way. This is part and parcel of what it means to be a growing, discipling, and sending congregation.

It is the transforming power and love of Jesus Christ in a person's life that brings freedom from the anger, the hate, and the alienation with which people struggle. The human heart and mindset is the problem, and through the Spirit of God conducting "heart surgery" we are enabled to embrace God's love for us and others in Christ.

It's the power of Christ Jesus that enables his people to pursue peace rather than violence. Jesus showed us that he came to offer the world peace—peace with God and with one another. Hate produces violence; love produces peace. Churches that take discipleship seriously take the message and way of peace seriously.

In our recently-established statement on core values, we declare that "pursuing peace" is one of our core values as Brethren in Christ. This value is

expanded on with this statement: "We value all human life and promote forgiveness, understanding, reconciliation, and non-violent resolution of conflict."

You and I can let our neighbours, our co-workers, and our friends know that there is an answer. There is hope. There is a solution. There is a better way. Jesus said, "peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

In the midst of Taber, Littleton, and Kosovo, let us

- reach out in love to those around us who are alone, angry, hurting, and broken.

- seek peace and reconciliation in our relationships, churches, communities and world.

- contribute to ministries like Mennonite Central Committee, seeking to serve the hurting in the Kosovo conflict.

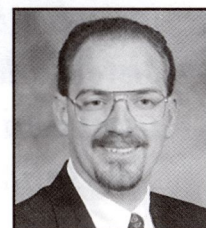
- embrace that teenager struggling to find acceptance and love.

- be proclaimers of hope in Jesus Christ to an increasingly hopeless world.

- be a voice of faith rather than fear.

Jesus is still the only Way, Truth, and Life for a hurting and needy world. That's the lesson of Littleton.

Darrell S. Winger  
is bishop of the Canadian Regional Conference.





# Discipleship for the **21<sup>st</sup>** Century

## The Kingdom Is *now!*

by Samuel Brubaker

What does it mean to live in Christ's kingdom? The Apostle Paul, writing to Jesus' followers at Colosse, declared that God has "brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves" (Colossians 1:13). For persons socialized in countries where public leaders do not use the title of king, the term easily develops an aura of unreality, of other-worldliness. This is especially true for persons (myself included) for whom the words "king" and "kingdom" have primarily religious rather than governmental meaning.

Such is not the case for the context in which the writers of Scripture addressed God's message. They referred to Jesus in the terminology of earthly power structures. Calling Jesus "king" in first century Judea signified to Jews that this man was the ruler, the "Messiah" for whom they longed, so that once again they could have an independent and glorious nation. To the Gentiles, calling Jesus "King" meant implying an alternate earthly authority. To Jew or Gentile, declaring Jesus to be king had significant social implications, and evoked either ridicule or disapproval against Jesus' followers who so proclaimed him. John Stoner has suggested that, in the United States, the equivalent expression would be to call Jesus "president." Imagine the impact if we actually started doing that.

Small wonder, then, that Jesus predicted that his followers would find themselves in tension with the power structures of their societies. They would live by his teachings, which would sometimes require non-cooperation with structures and/or strategies of earthly kings. They would not engage in worship of earthly rulers. They would live by values which regarded earthly wealth and power of secondary importance. They would pursue goals different than, indeed opposite to,

the power and prestige sought by most human leaders. They would seek the benefit, not destruction, of enemies. What the earthly powers often failed to realize, however, was that these Christians, although at times unsubservient to earthly powers, would be stellar citizens. They would be respectful, peaceful, productive, working for the good of their families and their society. People who live according to God's ways are a blessing to their societies, and are usually recognized as such by those who know them.

But they are an irritant to persons whose values and laws are according to the ways of unregenerate humankind. Jesus did not call us into a kingdom that's been put on hold. He called his followers to live here and now by the values, ways, and goals of his kingdom. He characterized those who heard his teachings but did not do them as a man building a house on sand. It is unfortunate, yet common, for persons who profess to be Jesus' followers to blend nationalism into their religion. Witness the display of the respective national flag in Christian sanctuaries. Witness the patriotic hymns and praise to nation which will be part of the order of worship in many Christian gatherings on Independence Sunday. Witness the approval of violent military "solutions" arising from Christian voices. Such manifestations belie our claim that Jesus is King.

A kingdom under control of a king is a place where the will of the king is followed. So it is with Christ's kingdom. It is not geographically delineated, but marked by the manner of life of his subjects. They are more concerned about being his true followers than about enjoying the approval of an earthly kingdom which cares not about God nor his Son, Jesus Christ, who is worthy of every person's highest allegiance.

*Samuel Brubaker is a regular columnist in the Evangelical Visitor. A physician, he lives in Arcanum, Ohio.*



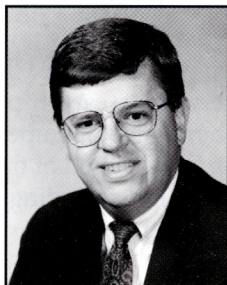
Bulletins and newsletters reprinting "Pontius Puddle" must pay \$10 for each use to Joel Kauffman, 111 Carter Road, Goshen, IN 46526.





## Ron Ross named Associate for Communications

In February of this year the General Conference Board approved the hiring of an Associate for Communications to oversee integrating general church communications. We are pleased to announce that Ronald C. Ross has been selected for this position. He is a Messiah College graduate with a major in communications and a minor in radio, television, and film.



He has also taken several post-graduate courses in graphic design and multimedia development.

Ron has worked in program and studio production at a Harrisburg, Pa., television studio. He went on to chair the Media Studies Division of Central Pennsylvania Business School. Most recently he served as department head for the graphic design and multimedia design programs at the Bradley Academy for the Visual Arts in York, Pa. He has significant experience in free-lance design, writing, and internet services.

His skills in the communication field are many, including: concept development, writing and design, publication and print development; multimedia and internet development; video and film production, public speaking and instruction; and management. Ron began his assignment with the Board for Media Ministries the end of July. He spent a week at the publishing house in Nappanee, Ind., before moving into the denominational offices in Grantham, Pa.

Ron and his wife Patty are members of the Dillsburg Brethren in Christ Church and are the parents of two children: Megan (10) and Matthew (7). The Rosses lead junior worship at the Dillsburg church and are heavily involved with the Fellowship and Family Life Commission there.

## Visitor will keep visiting

The *Evangelical Visitor* will continue publication. In January 1999, the Brethren in Christ Board for Media Ministries sent a survey to pastors and others interested in denominational communications. Out of 242 respondents there was a clear mandate for continuation of *Visitor*. More than 66.5 percent of the respondents affirmed future publication. Only 12.3 percent of the respondents thought we should discontinue publication. Twenty-one percent of the respondents did not express an opinion either way. By July 1999, both the Board for Media Ministries and the Leadership Council unanimously affirmed continuing *Visitor* as a serious communication piece for Brethren in Christ leadership at all levels, local through international.

Now, as part of the process to improve our publications, the Board for Media Ministries seeks to gather opinions from interested readers about the shape and content of upcoming issues of *Visitor*. Our desire is to provide a denominational publication that is meaningful to subscribers. We want a *Visitor* that you look forward to having in your home. In an effort to make decisions more relevant to your needs and desires, we are asking you to complete the following brief questionnaire and return it by September 15, 1999.

Your opinions as readers are most important to us. Please answer the following questions and fax, e-mail, or mail your response to the new Associate for Communications, Ron Ross.

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR VISITOR FOCUS

1. How long have you been reading *Visitor*?
2. Which feature do you read and use most?
3. With your responsibilities in the church how can the magazine best help you?
4. Which features will be useful to continue or discontinue?
5. What change in *Visitor* would make it more useful for you?

Send your response to: Ron Ross  
Brethren in Christ Offices  
P. O. Box A  
Grantham, PA 17027  
E-mail: rross@messiah.edu  
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